

SRI AUROBINDO

The Ideal of Human Unity

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

PONDICHERRY

Publishers :

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

First Edition .. 1910
Second Edition (revised)

All Rights Reserved

SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM PRESS, PONDICHERRY

MADE IN INDIA

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Ideal of Human Unity first appeared in the "Arya" (Vol. II, No. 2—Vol. IV, No. 12) complete in 35 Chapters, serially from September, 1915 to July, 1918.

It was reproduced in book-form in 1919 by The Sons of India Ltd., Madras (with three Appendices, a Preface and a detailed synopsis of the Chapters. The Appendices contained articles from the "Arya" setting forth the ideals of the Review).

The present edition is a revised version; but the revision was done before the last World War. It is, however, printed almost in that form brought up-to-date by the addition of a Postscript Chapter dealing with the world conditions today.

CONTENTS

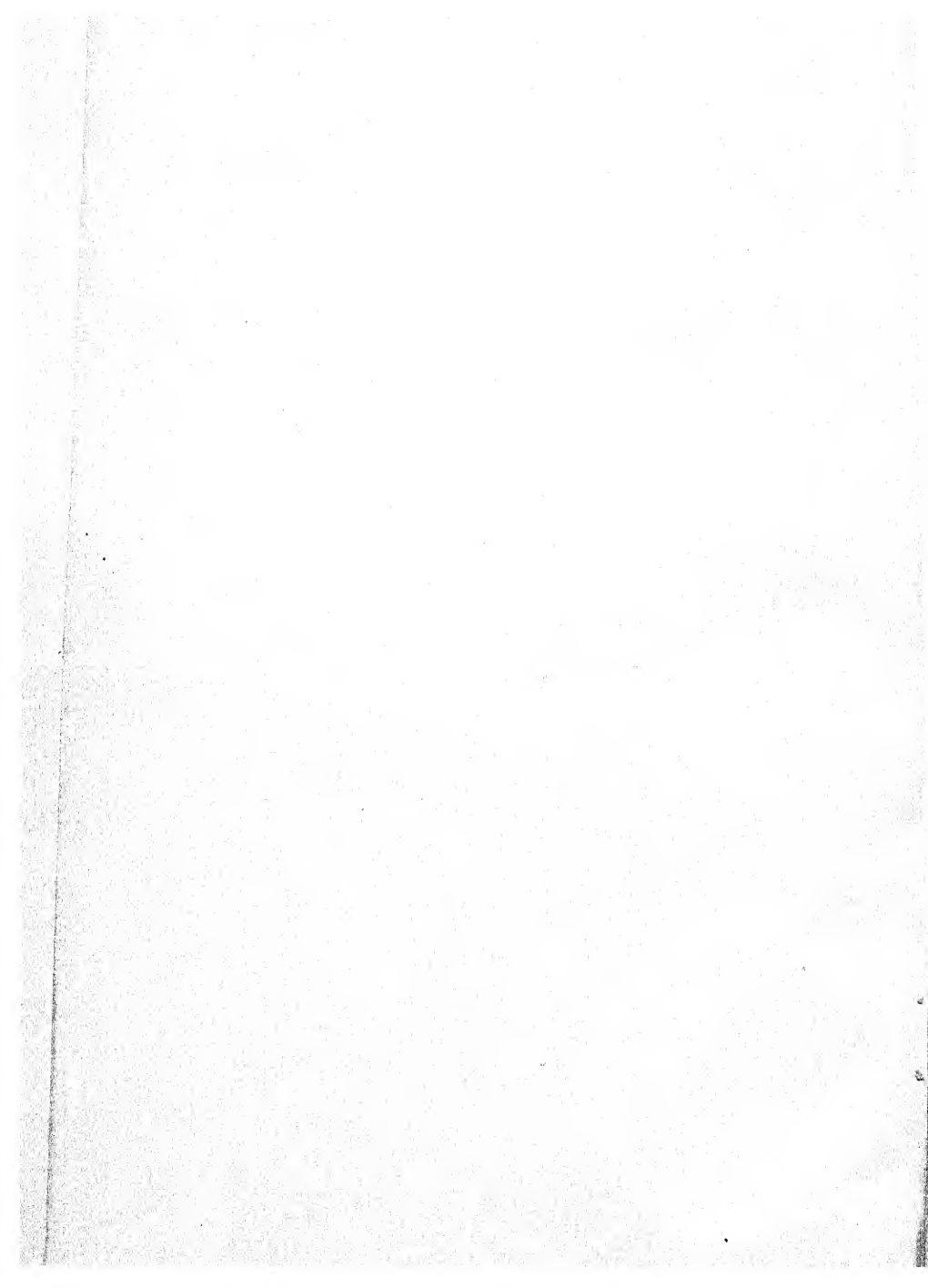
PART ONE

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. THE TURN TOWARDS UNITY: ITS NECESSITY AND DANGERS	1
II. THE IMPERFECTION OF PAST AGGREGATES ..	8
III. THE GROUP AND THE INDIVIDUAL ..	14
IV. THE INADEQUACY OF THE STATE IDEA ..	21
V. NATION AND EMPIRE: REAL AND POLITICAL UNITIES	31
VI. ANCIENT AND MODERN METHODS OF EMPIRE ..	41
VII. THE CREATION OF THE HETEROGENEOUS NATION	56
VIII. THE PROBLEM OF A FEDERATED HETEROGENEOUS EMPIRE	65
IX. THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD-EMPIRE ..	74
X. THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE ..	82
XI. THE SMALL FREE UNIT AND THE LARGER CONCENTRATED UNITY	95
XII. THE ANCIENT CYCLE OF PRENATIONAL EMPIRE-BUILDING—THE MODERN CYCLE OF NATION-BUILDING	106
XIII. THE FORMATION OF THE NATION-UNIT—THE THREE STAGES	118
XIV. THE POSSIBILITY OF A FIRST STEP TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL UNITY—ITS ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES	131
XV. SOME TIMES OF FULFILMENT	145
XVI. THE PROBLEM OF UNIFORMITY AND LIBERTY ..	158

PART TWO

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
xvii. NATURE'S LAW IN OUR PROGRESS—UNITY IN DIVERSITY, LAW AND LIBERTY ..	173
xviii. THE IDEAL SOLUTION—A FREE GROUPING OF MANKIND	186
xix. THE DRIVE TOWARDS CENTRALISATION AND UNIFORMITY. ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ..	199
xx. THE DRIVE TOWARDS ECONOMIC CENTRALISATION	210
xxi. THE DRIVE TOWARDS LEGISLATIVE AND SOCIAL CENTRALISATION AND UNIFORMITY ..	218
xxii. WORLD-UNION OR WORLD-STATE	232
xxiii. FORMS OF GOVERNMENT	235
xxiv. THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION ..	248
xxv. WAR AND THE NEED OF ECONOMIC UNITY ..	261
xxvi. THE NEED OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITY ..	272
xxvii. THE PERIL OF THE WORLD-STATE ..	286
xxviii. DIVERSITY IN ONENESS	296
xxix. THE IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS ..	309
xxx. THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE CONFEDERATION ..	322
xxxi. THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION ..	331
xxxii. INTERNATIONALISM	341
xxxiii. INTERNATIONALISM AND HUMAN UNITY ..	349
xxxiv. THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY	361
xxxv. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	370
xxxvi. A POSTSCRIPT CHAPTER	380

PART ONE



CHAPTER I

THE TURN TOWARDS UNITY: ITS NECESSITY AND DANGERS

THE surfaces of life are easy to understand; their laws, characteristic movements, practical utilities are ready to our hand and we can seize on them and turn them to account with a sufficient facility and rapidity. But they do not carry us very far. They suffice for an active superficial life from day to day, but they do not solve the great problems of existence. On the other hand, the knowledge of life's profundities, its potent secrets, its great, hidden, all-determining laws is exceedingly difficult to us. We have found no plummet that can fathom these depths; they seem to us a vague, indeterminate movement, a profound obscurity from which the mind recoils willingly to play with the fret and foam and facile radiances of the surface. Yet it is these depths and their unseen forces that we ought to know if we would understand existence; on the surface we get only Nature's secondary rules and practical bye-laws which help us to tide over the difficulties of the moment and to organise empirically without understanding them her continual transitions.

Nothing is more obscure to humanity or less seized by its understanding, whether in the power that moves it or the sense of the aim towards which it moves than its own communal and collective life. Sociology does

not help us, for it only gives us the general story of the past and the external conditions under which communities have survived. History teaches us nothing; it is a confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions. We do not seize the real sense of all this change and this continual streaming forward of human life in the channels of Time. What we do seize are current or recurrent phenomena, facile generalisations, partial ideas. We talk of democracy, aristocracy and autocracy, collectivism and individualism, imperialism and nationalism, the State and the commune, capitalism and labour; we advance hasty generalisations and make absolute systems which are positively announced today only to be abandoned perforce tomorrow; we espouse causes and ardent enthusiasms whose triumph turns to an early disillusionment and then forsake them for others, perhaps for those that we have taken so much trouble to destroy. For a whole century mankind thirsts and battles after liberty and earns it with a bitter expense of toil, tears and blood; the century that enjoys without having fought for it turns away as from a puerile illusion and is ready to renounce the depreciated gain as the price of some new good. And all this happens because our whole thought and action with regard to our collective life is shallow and empirical; it does not seek for, it does not base itself on a firm, profound and complete knowledge. The moral is not the vanity of human life, of its ardours and enthusiasms and of the ideals it pursues, but the necessity of a wiser, larger, more patient search after its true law and aim.

Today the ideal of human unity is more or less vaguely making its way to the front of our consciousness. The emergence of an ideal in human thought is always the

sign of an intention in Nature, but not always of an intention to accomplish; sometimes it indicates only an attempt which is predestined to temporary failure. For Nature is slow and patient in her methods. She takes up ideas and half carries them out, then drops them by the wayside to resume them in some future era with a better combination. She tempts humanity, her thinking instrument, and tests how far it is ready for the harmony she has imagined; she allows and incites man to attempt and fail, so that he may learn and succeed better another time. Still the ideal, having once made its way to the front of thought, must certainly be attempted, and this ideal of human unity is likely to figure largely among the determining forces of the future; for the intellectual and material circumstances of the age have prepared and almost impose it, especially the scientific discoveries which have made our earth so small that its vastest kingdoms seem now no more than the provinces of a single country.

But this very commodity of the material circumstances may bring about the failure of the ideal; for when material circumstances favour a great change, but the heart and mind of the race are not really ready—especially the heart—failure may be predicted, unless indeed men are wise in time and accept the inner change along with the external readjustment. But at present the human intellect has been so much mechanised by physical Science that it is likely to attempt the revolution it is beginning to envisage principally or solely through mechanical means, through social and political adjustments. Now it is not by social and political devices, or at any rate not by these, chiefly or only, that the unity of the human race can be enduringly or fruitfully accomplished.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

It must be remembered that a greater social or political unity is not necessarily a boon in itself; it is only worth pursuing in so far as it provides a means and a framework for a better, richer, more happy and puissant individual and collective life. But hitherto the experience of mankind has not favoured the view that huge aggregations, closely united and strictly organised, are favourable to a rich and puissant human life. It would seem rather that collective life is more at ease with itself, more genial, varied, fruitful when it can concentrate itself in small spaces and simpler organisms.

If we consider the past of humanity so far as it is known to us, we find that the interesting periods of human life, the scenes in which it has been most richly lived and has left behind it the most precious fruits, were precisely those ages and countries in which humanity was able to organise itself in little independent centres acting intimately upon each other but not fused into a single unity. Modern Europe owes two-thirds of its civilisation to three such supreme moments of human history, the religious life of the congeries of tribes which called itself Israel and, subsequently, of the little nation of the Jews, the many-sided life of the small Greek city states, the similar, though more restricted, artistic and intellectual life of mediaeval Italy. Nor was any age in Asia so rich in energy, so well worth living in, so productive of the best and most enduring fruits as that heroic period of India when she was divided into small kingdoms, many of them no larger than a modern district. Her most wonderful activities, her most vigorous and enduring work, that which, if we had to make a choice, we should keep at the sacrifice of all else, belonged to that period; the second best came afterwards in larger, but still comparatively small, nations

and kingdoms like those of the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras. In comparison she received little from the greater empires that rose and fell within her borders, the Moghul, the Gupta or the Maurya—little indeed except political and administrative organisation, some fine art and literature and a certain amount of lasting work in other kinds, not always of the best quality. Their impulse was rather towards elaborate organisation than original, stimulating and creative.

Nevertheless, in this regime of the small city state or of regional cultures, there was always a defect which compelled a tendency towards large organisations. The defect was a characteristic of impermanence, often of disorder, especially of defencelessness against the onslaught of larger organisations, even of an insufficient capacity for widespread material well-being. Therefore this earlier form of collective life tended to disappear and give place to the organisation of nations, kingdoms and empires.

And here we notice, first, that it is the groupments of smaller nations which have had the most intense life and not the huge States and colossal empires. Collective life diffusing itself in too vast spaces seems to lose intensity and productiveness. Europe has lived in England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, the small States of Germany—all her later civilisation and progress evolved itself there, not in the huge mass of the Holy Roman or the Russian Empire. We see a similar phenomenon in the social and political field when we compare the intense life and activity of Europe in its many nations acting richly upon each other, rapidly progressing by quick creative steps and sometimes by bounds with the great masses of Asia, her long periods of immobility in which wars and revolutions seem to be small, temporary and usually

unproductive episodes, her centuries of religious, philosophic and artistic reveries, her tendency towards an increasing isolation and a final stagnancy of the outward life.

Secondly, we note that in this organisation of nations and kingdoms those which have had the most vigorous life have gained it by a sort of artificial concentration of the vitality into some head, centre or capital, London, Paris, Rome. By this device Nature, while acquiring the benefits of a larger organisation and more perfect unity, preserves to some extent that equally precious power of fruitful concentration in a small space and into a closely packed activity which she had possessed in her more primitive system of the city state or petty kingdom. But this advantage was purchased by the condemnation of the rest of the organisation, the district, the provincial town, the village to a dull, petty and somnolent life in strange contrast with the vital intensity of the *urbs* or metropolis.

The Roman Empire is the historic example of an organisation of unity which transcended the limits of the nation, and its advantages and disadvantages are there perfectly typified. The advantages are admirable organisation, peace, wide-spread security, order and material well-being; the disadvantage is that the individual, the city, the region sacrifice their independent life and become mechanical parts of a machine; life loses its colour, richness, variety, freedom and victorious impulse towards creation. The organisation is great and admirable, but the individual dwindles and is overpowered and overshadowed; and eventually by the smallness and feebleness of the individual the huge organism inevitably and slowly loses even its great conservative vitality and dies of an increasing stagnation. Even while outwardly whole and

THE TURN TOWARDS UNITY

untouched, the structure has become rotten and begins to crack and dissolve at the first shock from outside. Such organisations, such periods are immensely useful for conservation, even as the Roman Empire served to consolidate the gains of the rich centuries that preceded it. But they arrest life and growth.

We see, then, what is likely to happen if there were a social, administrative and political unification of mankind, such as some have begun to dream of nowadays. A tremendous organisation would be needed under which both individual and regional life would be crushed, dwarfed, deprived of their necessary freedom like a plant without rain and wind and sunlight, and this would mean for humanity, after perhaps one first outburst of satisfied and joyous activity, a long period of mere conservation, increasing stagnancy and ultimately decay.

Yet the unity of mankind is evidently a part of Nature's eventual scheme and must come about. Only it must be under other conditions and with safeguards which will keep the race intact in the roots of its vitality, richly diverse in its oneness.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPERFECTION OF PAST AGGREGATES

THE whole process of Nature depends on a balancing and a constant tendency to harmony between two poles of life, the individual whom the whole or aggregate nourishes and the whole or aggregate which the individual helps to constitute. Human life forms no exception to the rule. Therefore the perfection of human life must involve the elaboration of an as yet unaccomplished harmony between these two poles of our existence, the individual and the social aggregate. The perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs and eventually to that of the largest possible human aggregate, the whole of a united humanity.

For the gradual process of Nature introduces a complication which prevents the individual from standing in a pure and direct relation to the totality of mankind. Between himself and this too immense whole there erect themselves partly as aids, partly as barriers to the final unity, the lesser aggregates which it has been necessary to form in the progressive stages of human culture. For the obstacles of space, the difficulties of organisation and the limitations of the human heart and brain have necessitated the formation first of small, then of larger and yet

larger aggregates so that he may be gradually trained by a progressive approach till he is ready for the final universality. The family, the commune, the clan or tribe, the class, the city state or congeries of tribes, the nation, the empire are so many stages in this progress and constant enlargement. If the smaller aggregates were destroyed as soon as the larger are successfully formed, this graduation would result in no complexity; but Nature does not follow this course. She seldom destroys entirely the types she has once made or only destroys that for which there is no longer any utility; the rest she keeps in order to serve her need or her passion for variety, richness, multiformity and only effaces the dividing lines or modifies the characteristics and relations sufficiently to allow of the larger unity she is creating. Therefore at every step humanity is confronted with various problems which arise not only from the difficulty of accord between the interests of the individual and those of the immediate aggregate, the community, but between the need and interests of the smaller integralities and the growth of that larger whole which is to ensphere them all.

History has preserved for us scattered instances of this travail, instances of failure and success which are full of instruction. We see the struggle towards the aggregation of tribes among the Semitic nations, Jew and Arab, surmounted in the one after a scission into two kingdoms which remained a permanent source of weakness to the Jewish nation, overcome only temporarily in the other by the sudden unifying force of Islam. We see the failure of clan life to combine into an organised national existence in the Celtic races, a failure entire in Ireland and Scotland and only surmounted through the crushing out of clan life by a foreign rule and culture, overcome only at the

last moment in Wales. We see the failure of the city states and small regional peoples to fuse themselves in the history of Greece, the signal success of a similar struggle of Nature in the development of Roman Italy. The whole past of India for the last two thousand years and more has been the attempt, unavailing in spite of many approximations to success, to overcome the centrifugal tendency of an extraordinary number and variety of disparate elements, the family, the commune, the clan, the caste, the small regional state or people, the large linguistic unit, the religious community, the nation within the nation. We may perhaps say that here Nature tried an experiment of unparalleled complexity and potential richness, accumulating all possible difficulties in order to arrive at the most opulent result. But in the end the problem proved insoluble or, at least, was not solved and Nature had to resort to her usual *deus ex machina* denouement, the instrumentality of a foreign rule.

But even when the nation is sufficiently organised,—the largest unit yet successfully developed by Nature,—entire unity is not always achieved. If no other elements of discord remain, yet the conflict of classes is always possible. And the phenomenon leads us to another rule of this gradual development of Nature in human life which we shall find of very considerable importance when we come to the question of a realisable human unity. The perfection of the individual in a perfected society or eventually in a perfected humanity—understanding perfection always in a relative and progressive sense—is the inevitable aim of Nature. But the progress of all the individuals in a society does not proceed *pari passu*, with an equal and equable march. Some advance, others remain stationary—absolutely or relatively,—others fall back.

Consequently the emergence of a dominant class is inevitable within the aggregate itself, just as in the constant clash between the aggregates the emergence of dominant nations is inevitable. That class will predominate which develops most perfectly the type Nature needs at the time for her progress or, it may be, for her retrogression. If she demands power and strength of character, a dominant aristocracy emerges; if knowledge and science, a dominant literary or savant class; if practical ability, ingenuity, economy and efficient organisation, a dominant bourgeoisie or Vaishya class, usually with the lawyer at the head; if diffusion rather than concentration of general well-being and a close organisation of toil, then even the domination of an artisan class is not impossible.

But this phenomenon, whether of dominant classes or dominant nations, can never be more than a temporary necessity; for the final aim of Nature in human life cannot be the exploitation of the many by the few or even of the few by the many, can never be the perfection of some at the cost of the abject submergence and ignorant subjection of the bulk of humanity; these can only be transient devices. Therefore we see that such dominations bear always in them the seed of their own destruction. They must pass either by the ejection or destruction of the exploiting element or else by a fusion and equalisation. We see in Europe and America that the dominant Brahmin and the dominant Kshatriya have been either abolished or are on the point of subsidence into equality with the general mass. Two rigidly separate classes alone remain; the dominant propertied class and the labourer, and all the most significant movements of the day have for their purpose the abolition of this last superiority. In this persistent tendency, Europe has obeyed one great

law of Nature's progressive march, her trend towards a final equality. Absolute equality is surely neither intended nor possible, just as absolute uniformity is both impossible and utterly undesirable; but a fundamental equality which will render the play of true superiority and difference inoffensive, is essential to any conceivable perfectibility of the human race.

Therefore, the perfect counsel for a dominant minority is always to recognise in good time the right hour for its abdication and for the imparting of its ideals, qualities, culture, experience to the rest of the aggregate or to as much of it as is prepared for that progress. Where this is done, the social aggregate advances normally and without disruption or serious wound or malady; otherwise a disordered progress is imposed upon it, for Nature will not suffer human egoism to baffle for ever her fixed intention and necessity. Where the dominant classes successfully avoid her demand upon them, the worst of destinies is likely to overtake the social aggregate,—as in India where the final refusal of the Brahmin and other privileged classes to call up the bulk of the nation as far as possible to their level, their fixing of an unbridgeable gulf of superiority between themselves and the rest of society, has been a main cause of eventual decline and degeneracy. For where her aims are frustrated, Nature inevitably withdraws her force from the offending unit till she has brought in and used other and external means to reduce the obstacle to a nullity.

But even if the unity within is made as perfect as social, administrative and cultural machinery can make it, the question of the individual still remains. For these social units or aggregates are not like the human body in which the component cells are capable of no separate life apart

from the aggregate. The human individual tends to exist in himself and to exceed the limits of the family, the clan, the class, the nation; and even, that self-sufficiency on one side, that universality on the other are the essential elements of his perfection. Therefore, just as the systems of social aggregation which depend on the domination of a class or classes over others must change or dissolve, so the social aggregates which stand in the way of this perfection of the individual and seek to coerce him within their limited mould and into the rigidity of a narrow culture or petty class or national interest, must find their term and their day of change or destruction under the irresistible impulsion of progressing Nature.

CHAPTER III

THE GROUP AND THE INDIVIDUAL

It is a constant method of Nature, when she has two elements of a harmony to reconcile, to proceed at first by a long continued balancing in which she sometimes seems to lean entirely on one side, sometimes entirely to the other, at others to correct both excesses by a more or less successful temporary adjustment and moderating compromise. The two elements appear then as opponents necessary to each other who therefore labour to arrive at some conclusion of their strife. But as each has its egoism and that innate tendency of all things which drives them not only towards self-preservation but towards self-assertion in proportion to their available force, they seek each to arrive at a conclusion in which itself shall have the maximum part and dominate utterly if possible or even swallow up entirely the egoism of the other in its own egoism. Thus the progress towards harmony accomplishes itself by a strife of forces and seems often to be no effort towards concord or mutual adjustment at all, but rather towards a mutual devouring. In effect, the swallowing up, not of one by the other, but of each by the other, so that both shall live entirely in the other and as the other, is our highest ideal of oneness. It is the last ideal of love at which strife tries ignorantly to arrive; for by strife one can only arrive at an adjustment of the two opposite demands, not at a stable harmony, a

compromise between two conflicting egoisms and not the fusing of them into each other. Still, strife does lead to an increasing mutual comprehension which eventually makes the attempt at real oneness possible.

In the relations between the individual and the group, this constant tendency of Nature appears as the strife between two equally deep-rooted human tendencies, individualism and collectivism. On one side is the engrossing authority, perfection and development of the State, on the other the distinctive freedom, perfection and development of the individual man. The State idea, the small or the vast living machine, and the human idea, the more and more distinct and luminous Person, the increasing God, stand in perpetual opposition. The size of the State makes no difference to the essence of the struggle and need make none to its characteristic circumstances. It was the family, the tribe or the city, the *polis*; it became the clan, the caste and the class, the *kula*, the *gens*. It is now the nation. Tomorrow or the day after it may be all mankind. But even then the question will remain poised between man and humanity, between the self-liberating Person and the engrossing collectivity.

If we consult only the available facts of history and sociology, we must suppose that our race began with the all-engrossing group to which the individual was entirely subservient and that increasing individuality is a circumstance of human growth, a fruit of increasing conscious Mind. Originally, we may suppose, man was altogether gregarious, association his first necessity for survival; since survival is the first necessity of all being, the individual could be nothing but an instrument for the strength and safety of the group, and if we add to strength and safety growth, efficiency, self-assertion as well as self-preservation,

this is still the dominant idea of all collectivism. This turn is a necessity born of circumstance and environment. Looking more into fundamental things we perceive that in Matter uniformity is the sign of the group; free variation and individual development progress with the growth of Life and Mind. If then we suppose man to be an evolution of mental being in Matter and out of Matter, we must assume that he begins with uniformity and subservience of the individual and proceeds towards variety and freedom of the individual. The necessity of circumstance and environment and the inevitable law of his fundamental principles of being would then point to the same conclusion, the same process of his historic and pre-historic evolution.

But there is also the ancient tradition of humanity, which it is never safe to ignore or treat as mere fiction; that the social state was preceded by another, free and unsocial. According to modern scientific ideas, if such a state ever existed, and that is far from certain, it must have been not merely unsocial but anti-social; it must have been the condition of man as an isolated animal, living as the beast of prey, before he became in the process of his development an animal of the pack. But the tradition is rather that of a golden age in which he was freely social without society. Not bound by laws or institutions but living by natural instinct or free knowledge, he held the right law of his living in himself and needed neither to prey on his fellows nor to be restrained by the iron yoke of the collectivity. We may say, if we will, that here poetic or idealistic imagination played upon a deep-seated race-memory; early civilised man read his growing ideal of a free, unorganised, happy association into his race-memory of an unorganised, savage and anti-social

existence. But it is also possible that our progress has not been a development in a straight line, but in cycles, and that in those cycles there have been periods of at least partial realisation in which men did become able to live according to the high dream of philosophic Anarchism, associated by the inner law of love and light and right being, right thinking, right action and not coerced to unity by kings and parliaments, laws and policings and punishments with all that tyrant unease, petty or great oppression and repression and ugly train of selfishness and corruption which attend the forced government of man by man. It is even possible that our original state was an instinctive animal spontaneity of free and fluid association and that our final ideal state will be an enlightened, intuitive spontaneity of free and fluid association. Our destiny may be the conversion of an original animal association into a community of the gods. Our progress may be a devious round leading from the easy and spontaneous uniformity and harmony which reflects Nature to the self-possessed unity which reflects the Divine.

However that may be, history and sociology tell us only—outside the attempts of religious or other idealisms to arrive either at a free solitude or a free association—of man as an individual in the more or less organised group. And in the group there are always two types. One asserts the State idea at the expense of the individual,—ancient Sparta, modern Germany; another asserts the supremacy of the State, but seeks at the same time to give as much freedom, power and dignity as is consistent with its control to the individuals who constitute it,—ancient Athens, modern France. But to these two has been added a third type in which the State abdicates as much as possible to the individual, boldly asserts that it

exists for his growth and to assure his freedom, dignity, successful manhood, experiments with a courageous faith whether after all it is not the utmost possible liberty, dignity and manhood of the individual which will best assure the well-being, strength and expansion of the State. Of this type England has been until recently the great exemplar,—England rendered free, prosperous, energetic, invincible by nothing else but the strength of this idea within her, blessed by the Gods with unexampled expansion, empire and good fortune because she has not feared at any time to obey this great tendency and take the risks of this great endeavour and even often to employ it beyond the limits of her own insular egoism. Unfortunately, that egoism, the defects of the race and the exaggerated assertion of a limited idea, which is the mark of our human ignorance, have prevented her from giving it the noblest and richest possible expression or to realise by it other results which the more strictly organised States have attained or are attaining. And in consequence we find the collective or State idea breaking down the old English tradition and it is possible that before long the great experiment will have come to an end in a lamentable admission of failure by the adoption of that Germanic “discipline” and “efficient” organisation, towards which all civilised humanity seems now to be tending. One may well ask oneself whether it was really necessary, whether, by a more courageous faith enlightened by a more flexible and vigilant intelligence, all the desirable results might not have been attained by a new and freer method that would yet keep intact the *dharma* of the race.

We must, again, note one other fact in connection with the claim of the State to suppress the individual in its own interest, that it is quite immaterial to the principle what

form the State may assume. The tyranny of the absolute king over all and the tyranny of the majority over the individual—which really converts itself by the paradox of human nature into a hypnotised oppression and repression of the majority by itself—are forms of one and the same tendency. Each, when it declares itself to be the State with its absolute "*L'état, c'est moi*", is speaking a profound truth even while it bases that truth upon a falsehood. The truth is that each really is the self-expression of the State in its characteristic attempt to subordinate to itself the free will, the free action, the power, dignity and self-assertion of the individuals constituting it. The falsehood lies in the underlying idea that the State is something greater than the individuals constituting it and can with impunity for itself and to the highest hope of humanity arrogate this oppressive supremacy.

In modern times the State idea has after a long interval fully reasserted itself and is dominating the thought and action of the world. It supports itself on two motives; one appeals to the external interest of the race, the other to its highest moral tendencies. It demands that individual egoism shall immolate itself to a collective interest; it claims that man shall live not for himself but for the whole, the group, the community. It asserts that the hope of the good and progress of humanity lies in the efficiency and organisation of the State. Its way to perfection lies through the ordering by the State of all the economic and vital arrangements of the individual and the group, the "mobilisation", to use a specious expression the war has set in vogue, of the intellect, capacity, thought, emotion, life of the individual, of all that he is and has, by the State in the interest of all. Pushed to its ultimate conclusion, this means the socialistic ideal in full force and

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

towards that conclusion humanity seems to be heading with a remarkable rapidity. The State idea is rushing towards possession with a great motor force and is prepared to crush under its wheels everything that conflicts with its force or asserts the right of other human tendencies. And yet the two ideas on which it bases itself are full of that fatal mixture of truth and falsehood which pursues all our human claims and assertions. It is necessary to apply to them the solvent of a searching and unbiassed thought which refuses to be cheated by words, if we are not to describe helplessly another circle of illusion before we return to the deep and complex truth of Nature which should rather be our light and guide.

CHAPTER IV

THE INADEQUACY OF THE STATE IDEA

WHAT, after all, is this State idea, this idea of the organised community to which the individual has to be immolated? Theoretically, it is the subordination of the individual to the good of all that is demanded; practically, it is his subordination to a collective egoism, political, military, economic, which seeks to satisfy certain collective aims and ambitions shaped and imposed on the great mass of the individuals by a smaller or larger number of ruling persons who are supposed in some way to represent the community. It is immaterial whether these belong to a governing class or emerge as in modern States from the mass partly by force of character, but much more by force of circumstances; nor does it make any essential difference that their aims and ideals are imposed nowadays more by the hypnotism of verbal persuasion than by overt and actual force. In either case, there is no guarantee that this ruling class or ruling body represents the best mind of the nation or its noblest aims or its highest instincts.

Nothing of the kind can be asserted of the modern politician in any part of the world; he does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionality, timidity

and pretence. Great issues often come to him for decision, but he does not deal with them greatly; high words and noble ideas are on his lips, but they become rapidly the claptrap of a party. The disease and falsehood of modern political life is patent in every country of the world and only the hypnotised acquiescence of all, even of the intellectual classes, in the great organised sham, cloaks and prolongs the malady, the acquiescence that men yield to everything that is habitual and makes the present atmosphere of their lives. Yet it is by such minds that the good of all has to be decided, to such hands that it has to be entrusted, to such an agency calling itself the State that the individual is being more and more called upon to give up the government of his activities. As a matter of fact, it is in no way the largest good of all that is thus secured, but a great deal of organised blundering and evil with a certain amount of good which makes for real progress, because Nature moves forward always in the midst of all stumblings and secures her aims in the end more often in spite of man's imperfect mentality than by its means.

But even if the governing instrument were better constituted and of a higher mental and moral character, even if some way could be found to do what ancient civilisations by their enforcement of certain high ideals and disciplines tried to do with their ruling classes, still the State would not be what the State idea pretends that it is. Theoretically, it is the collective wisdom and force of the community made available and organised for the general good. Practically, what controls the engine and drives the train is so much of the intellect and power available in the community as the particular machinery of State organisation will allow to come to the surface;

but it is also caught in the machinery and hampered by it and hampered as well by the large amount of folly and selfish weakness that comes up in the emergence. Doubtless, this is the best that can be done under the circumstances, and Nature, as always, utilises it for the best. But things would be much worse if there were not a field left for a less trammelled individual effort doing what the State cannot do, deploying and using the sincerity, energy, idealism of the best individuals to attempt that which the State has not the wisdom or courage to attempt, getting that done which a collective conservatism and imbecility would either leave undone or actively suppress and oppose. It is this energy of the individual which is the really effective agent of collective progress. The State sometimes comes in to aid it and then, if its aid does not mean undue control, it serves a positively useful end. As often it stands in the way and then serves either as a brake upon progress or supplies the necessary amount of organised opposition and friction always needed to give greater energy and a more complete shape to the new thing which is in process of formation. But what we are now tending towards is such an increase of organised State power and such a huge irresistible and complex State activity as will either eliminate free individual effort altogether or leave it dwarfed and cowed into helplessness. The necessary corrective to the defects, limitations and inefficiency of the State machine will disappear.

The organised State is neither the best mind of the nation nor is it even the sum of the communal energies. It leaves out of its organised action and suppresses or unduly depresses the working force and thinking mind of important minorities, often of those which represent

that which is best in the present and that which is developing for the future. It is a collective egoism much inferior to the best of which the community is capable. What that egoism is in its relation to other collective egoisms we know, and its ugliness has recently been forced upon the vision and the conscience of mankind. The individual has usually something at least like a soul, and, at any rate, he makes up for the deficiencies of the soul by a system of morality and an ethical sense, and for the deficiencies of these again by the fear of social opinion or, failing that, a fear of the communal law which he has ordinarily either to obey or at least to circumvent; and even the difficulty of circumventing is a check on all except the most violent or the most skilful. But the State is an entity which, with the greatest amount of power, is the least hampered by internal scruples or external checks. It has no soul or only a rudimentary one. It is a military, political and economic force; but it is only in a slight and undeveloped degree, if at all, an intellectual and ethical being. And unfortunately the chief use it makes of its undeveloped intellect is to blunt by fictions, catchwords and recently by State philosophies, its ill-developed ethical conscience. Man within the community is now at least a half-civilised creature, but his international existence is still primitive. Until recently the organised nation in its relations with other nations was only a huge beast of prey with appetites which sometimes slept when gorged or discouraged by events, but were always its chief reason for existence. Self-protection and self-expansion by the devouring of others were its *dharma*. At the present day there is no essential improvement; there is only a greater difficulty in devouring. A "sacred egoism" is still the ideal of

nations, and therefore there is neither any true and enlightened consciousness of human opinion to restrain the predatory State nor any effective international law. There is only the fear of defeat and the fear, recently, of a disastrous economic disorganisation; but experience after experience has shown that these checks are ineffective.

In its inner life this huge State egoism was once little better than in its outer relations.¹ Brutal, rapacious, cunning, oppressive, intolerant of free action, free speech and opinion, even of freedom of conscience in religion, it preyed upon individuals and classes within as upon weaker nations outside. Only the necessity of keeping alive and rich and strong in a rough sort of way the community on which it lived made its action partially and crudely beneficent. In modern times there has been much improvement in spite of deterioration in certain directions. The State now feels the necessity of justifying its existence by organising the general economic and animal well-being of the community and even of all individuals. It is beginning to see the necessity of assuring the intellectual and, indirectly, the moral development of the whole community. This attempt of the State to grow into an intellectual and moral being is one of the most interesting phenomena of modern civilisation. Even the necessity of intellectualising and moralising it in its external relations has been enforced upon the conscience of mankind by the European catastrophe. But the claim of the State to absorb all free

¹ I am speaking of the intermediate age between ancient and modern times. In ancient times the State had, in some countries at least, ideals and a conscience with regard to the community, but very little in its dealings with other States.

individual activities, a claim which it increasingly makes as it grows more clearly conscious of its new ideals and its possibilities, is, to say the least of it, premature and, if satisfied, will surely end in a check to human progress, a comfortably organised stagnancy such as overtook the Graeco-Roman world after the establishment of the Roman Empire.

The call of the State to the individual to immolate himself on its altar and to give up his free activities into an organised collective activity is therefore something quite different from the demand of our highest ideals. It amounts to the giving up of the present form of individual egoism into another, a collective form, larger but not superior, rather in many ways inferior to the best individual egoism. The altruistic ideal, the discipline of self-sacrifice, the need of a growing solidarity with our fellows and a growing collective soul in humanity are not in dispute. But the loss of self in the State is not the thing that these high ideals mean, nor is it the way to their fulfilment. Man must learn not to suppress and mutilate, but to fulfil himself in the fulfilment of mankind, even as he must learn not to mutilate or destroy, but to complete his ego by expanding it out of its limitations and losing it in something greater which it now tries to represent. But the deglutition of the free individual by a huge State machine is quite another consummation. The State is a convenience, and a rather clumsy convenience, for our common development; it ought never to be made an end in itself.

The second claim of the State idea that this supremacy and universal activity of the organised State machine is the best means of human progress, is also an exaggeration and a fiction. Man lives by the community; he needs it

to develop himself individually as well as collectively. But is it true that a State-governed action is the most capable of developing the individual perfectly as well as of serving the common ends of the community? It is not true. What is true is that it is capable of providing the co-operative action of the individuals in the community with all necessary conveniences and of removing from it disabilities and obstacles which would otherwise interfere with its working. Here the real utility of the State ceases. The non-recognition of the possibilities of human co-operation was the weakness of English individualism; the turning of a utility for co-operative action into an excuse for rigid control by the State is the weakness of the Teutonic idea of collectivism. When the State attempts to take up the control of the co-operative action of the community, it condemns itself to create a monstrous machinery which will end by crushing out the freedom, initiative and serious growth of the human being.

The State is bound to act crudely and in the mass; it is incapable of that free, harmonious and intelligently or instinctively varied action which is proper to organic growth. For the State is not an organism; it is a machinery, and it works like a machine, without tact, taste, delicacy or intuition. It tries to manufacture, but what humanity is here to do is to grow and create. We see this flaw in State-governed education. It is right and necessary that education should be provided for all and in providing for it the State is eminently useful; but when it controls the education, it turns it into a routine, a mechanical system in which individual initiative, individual growth and true development as opposed to a routine instruction become impossible. The State tends

always to uniformity, because uniformity is easy to it and natural variation is impossible to its essentially mechanical nature; but uniformity is death, not life. A national culture, a national religion, a national education may still be useful things provided they do not interfere with the growth of human solidarity on the one side and individual freedom of thought and conscience and development on the other; for they give form to the communal soul and help it to add its quota to the sum of human advancement; but a State education, a State religion, a State culture are unnatural violences. And the same rule holds good in different ways and to a different extent in other directions of our communal life and its activities.

The business of the State, so long as it continues to be a necessary element in human life and growth, is to provide all possible facilities for co-operative action, to remove obstacles, to prevent all really harmful waste and friction,—a certain amount of waste and friction is necessary and useful to all natural action,—and, removing avoidable injustice, to secure for every individual a just and equal chance of self-development and satisfaction to the extent of his powers and in the line of his nature. So far the aim in modern socialism is right and good. But all unnecessary interference with the freedom of man's growth is or can be harmful. Even co-operative action is injurious if, instead of seeking the good of all compatibly with the necessities of individual growth,—and without individual growth there can be no real and permanent good of all,—it immolates the individual to a communal egoism and prevents so much free room and initiative as is necessary for the flowering of a more perfectly developed humanity. So

long as humanity is not full-grown, so long as it needs to grow and is capable of a greater perfectibility, there can be no static good of all independent of the growth of the individuals composing the all. All collectivist ideals which seek unduly to subordinate the individual, really envisage a static condition whether it be a present status or one it soon hopes to establish, after which all attempt at serious change would be regarded as an offence of impatient individualism against the peace, just routine and security of the happily established communal order. Always it is the individual who progresses and compels the rest to progress; the instinct of the collectivity is to stand still in its established order. Progress, growth, realisation of wider being, give his greatest sense of happiness to the individual; status, secure ease, to the collectivity. And so it must be as long as the latter is more a physical and economic entity than a self-conscious collective soul.

It is therefore quite improbable that in the present conditions of the race a healthy unity of mankind can be brought about by State machinery, whether it be by a grouping of powerful and organised States enjoying carefully regulated and legalised relations with each other or by the substitution of a single World-State for the present half chaotic half ordered comity of nations,—be the form of that World-State a single Empire like the Roman or a federated unity. Such an external or administrative unity may be intended in the near future of mankind in order to accustom the race to the idea of a common life, to its habit, to its possibility, but it cannot be really healthy, durable or beneficial over all the true line of human destiny unless something be developed, more profound, internal and real. Otherwise the

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

experience of the ancient world will be repeated on a larger scale and in other circumstances. The experiment will break down and give place to a new reconstructive age of confusion and anarchy. Perhaps this experience also is necessary for mankind; yet it ought to be possible for us now to avoid it by subordinating mechanical means to our true development through a moralised and even a spiritualised humanity united in its inner soul and not only in its outward life and body.

CHAPTER V

NATION AND EMPIRE: REAL AND POLITICAL UNITIES

THE problem of the unification of mankind resolves itself into two distinct difficulties. There is the doubt whether the collective egoisms already created in the natural evolution of humanity can at this time be sufficiently modified or abolished and whether even an external unity in some effective form can be securely established. And there is the doubt whether, even if any such external unity can be established, it will not be at the price of crushing both the free life of the individual and the free play of the various collective units already created in which there is a real and active life and substituting a State organisation which will mechanise human existence. Apart from these two uncertainties there is a third doubt whether a really living unity can be achieved by a mere economic, political and administrative unification and whether it ought not to be preceded by at least the strong beginnings of a moral and spiritual oneness. It is the first question that must be taken first in the logical order.

At the present stage of human progress the nation is the living collective unit of humanity. Empires exist, but they are as yet only political and not real units; they have no life from within and owe their continuance to a force imposed on their constituent elements or else to a

political convenience felt or acquiesced in by the constituents and favoured by the world outside. Austria was long the standing example of such an empire; it was a political convenience favoured by the world outside, acquiesced in until recently by its constituent elements and maintained by the force of the central Germanic element incarnated in the Hapsburg dynasty,—of late with the active aid of its Magyar partner. If the political convenience of an empire of this kind ceases, if the constituent elements no longer acquiesce and are drawn more powerfully by a centrifugal force, if at the same time the world outside no longer favours the combination, then force alone remains as the one agent of an artificial unity. There arose indeed a new political convenience which the existence of Austria served even after it suffered from this tendency of dissolution, but that was the convenience of the Germanic idea which made it an inconvenience to the rest of Europe and deprived it of the acquiescence of important constituent elements which were drawn towards other combinations outside the Austrian formula. From that moment the existence of the Austrian Empire was in jeopardy and depended, not on any inner necessity, but first on the power of the Austro-Magyar partnership to crush down the Slav nations within it and, secondly, on the continued power and dominance of Germany and the Germanic idea in Europe, that is to say, on force alone. And although in Austria the weakness of the imperial form of unity was singularly conspicuous and its conditions exaggerated, still those conditions are the same for all empires which are not at the same time national units. It was not so long ago that most political thinkers perceived at least the strong possibility of an automatic

dissolution of the British Empire by the self-detachment of the colonies, in spite of the close links of race, language and origin that should have bound them to the mother country. This was because the political convenience of imperial unity, though enjoyed by the colonies, was not sufficiently appreciated by them and, on the other hand, there was no living principle of national oneness. The Australians and Canadians were beginning to regard themselves as new separate nations rather than as limbs of an extended British nationality. Things are now changed in both respects, a wider formula has been discovered, and the British Empire is for the moment proportionately stronger.

Nevertheless, it may be asked, why should this distinction be made of the political and the real unit when name, kind and form are the same? It must be made because it is of the greatest utility to a true and profound political science and involves the most important consequences. When an empire like Austria, a non-national empire, is broken to pieces, it perishes for good; there is no innate tendency to recover the outward unity, because there is no real inner oneness; there is only a politically manufactured aggregate. On the other hand, a real national unity broken up by circumstances will always preserve a tendency to recover and reassert its oneness. The Greek Empire has gone the way of all empires, but the Greek nation, after many centuries of political non-existence, again possesses its separate body, because it has preserved its separate ego and therefore really existed under the covering rule of the Turk. So has it been with all the races under the Turkish yoke, because that powerful suzerainty, stern as it was in many respects, never attempted to obliterate their national characteristics

or substitute an Ottoman nationality. These nations have revived and have reconstituted or are attempting to reconstitute themselves in the measure in which they have preserved their real national sense. The Serbian national idea attempted to recover and has recovered all territory in which the Serb exists or predominates. Greece attempts to reconstitute herself in her mainland, islands and Asiatic colonies, but cannot now reconstitute the old Greece since even Thrace is rather Bulgar than Hellenic. Italy has become an external unity again after so many centuries because, though no longer a State, she never ceased to be a single people.

This truth of a real unity is so strong that even nations which never in the past realised an outward unification, to which Fate and circumstance and their own selves have been adverse, nations which have been full of centrifugal forces and easily overpowered by foreign intrusions, have yet always developed a centripetal force as well and arrived inevitably at organised oneness. Ancient Greece clung to her separatist tendencies, her self-sufficient city or regional states, her little mutually repellent autonomies; but the centripetal force was always there manifested in leagues, associations of States, suzerainties like the Spartan and Athenian. It realised itself in the end, first, imperfectly and temporarily by the Macedonian overrule, then by a strange enough development, through the evolution of the Eastern Roman world into a Greek and Byzantine Empire, and it has again revived in modern Greece. And we have seen in our own day Germany, constantly disunited since ancient times, develop at last to portentous issues its innate sense of oneness formidably embodied in the Empire of the Hohenzollerns and persistent after its fall in a federal

Republic. Nor would it at all be surprising to those who study the working of forces and not merely the trend of outward circumstances, if one yet far-off result of the war were to be the fusion of the one Germanic element still left outside, the Austro-German, into the Germanic whole, although possibly in some other embodiment than Prussian hegemony or Hohenzollern Empire.¹ In both these historic instances, as in so many others, the unification of Saxon England, mediaeval France, the formation of the United States of America, it was a real unity, a psychologically distinct unit which tended at first ignorantly by the subconscious necessity of its being and afterwards with a sudden or gradual awakening to the sense of political oneness, towards an inevitable external unification. It is a distinct group-soul which is driven by inward necessity and uses outward circumstances to constitute for itself an organised body.

But the most striking example in history is the evolution of India. Nowhere else have the centrifugal forces been so strong, numerous, complex, obstinate. The mere time taken by the evolution has been prodigious; the disastrous vicissitudes through which it has had to work itself out have been appalling. And yet through it all the inevitable tendency has worked constantly, pertinaciously, with the dull, obscure, indomitable, relentless obstinacy of Nature when she is opposed in her instinctive purposes by man, and finally, after a struggle enduring through millenniums, has triumphed. And, as usually happens when she is thus opposed by her own mental and human

¹ This possibility realised itself for a time, but by means and under circumstances which made the revival of Austrian national sentiment and a separate national existence inevitable.

material, it is the most adverse circumstances that the subconscious worker has turned into her most successful instruments. The beginnings of the centripetal tendency in India go back to the earliest times of which we have record and are typified in the ideal of the Samrat or Chakravarti Raja and the military and political use of the Aswamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices. The two great national epics might almost have been written to illustrate this theme; for the one recounts the establishment of a unifying *dharmarājya* or imperial reign of justice, the other starts with an idealised description of such a rule pictured as once existing in the ancient and sacred past of the country. The political history of India is the story of a succession of empires, indigenous and foreign, each of them destroyed by centrifugal forces, but each bringing the centripetal tendency nearer to its triumphant emergence. And it is a significant circumstance that the more foreign the rule, the greater has been its force for the unification of the subject people. This is always a sure sign that the essential nation-unit is already there and that there is an indissoluble national vitality necessitating the inevitable emergence of the organised nation. In this instance, we see that the conversion of the psychological unity on which nationhood is based into the external organised unity by which it is perfectly realised, has taken a period of more than two thousand years and is not yet complete.¹ And yet, since the essentiality of the thing was there, not even the most formidable difficulties and delays, not even the most persistent

¹ But it must be remembered that France, Germany, modern Italy took each a thousand or two thousand years and more to form and set into a firm oneness.

incapacity for union in the people, not even the most disintegrating shocks from outside have prevailed against the obstinate subconscious necessity. And this is only the extreme illustration of a general law.

It will be useful to dwell a little upon this aid lent by foreign rule to the process of nation-making and see how it works. History abounds with illustrations. But in some cases the phenomenon of foreign domination is momentary and imperfect, in others long-enduring and complete, in others often repeated in various forms. In some instances the foreign element is rejected, its use once over, in others it is absorbed, in others accepted with more or less assimilation for a longer or briefer period as a ruling caste. The principle is the same, but it is worked variously by Nature according to the needs of the particular case. There is none of the modern nations in Europe which has not had to pass through a phase more or less prolonged, more or less complete, of foreign domination in order to realise its nationality. In Russia and England it was the domination of a foreign conquering race which rapidly became a ruling caste and was in the end assimilated and absorbed, in Spain the succession of the Roman, Goth and Moor, in Italy the overlordship of the Austrian, in the Balkans¹ the long suzerainty of the Turk, in Germany the transient yoke of Napoleon. But in all cases the essential has been a shock or a pressure which would either waken a loose psychological unity to the necessity of organising itself from within or would crush out, dispirit or deprive of

¹ Here there was no single people to be united but many separate peoples which had each to recover their separate independence or, in some cases, a coalition of kindred peoples.

power, vitality and reality the more obstinate factors of disunion. In some cases even an entire change of name, culture and civilisation has been necessary, as well as a more or less profound modification of the race. Notably has this happened in the formation of French nationality. The ancient Gallic people, in spite of or perhaps because of its Druidic civilisation and early greatness, was more incapable of organising a firm political unity than even the ancient Greeks or the old Indian kingdoms and republics. It needed the Roman rule and Latin culture, the superimposition of a Teutonic ruling caste and finally the shock of the temporary and partial English conquest to found the unequalled unity of modern France. Yet though name, civilisation and all else seem to have changed, the French nation of today is still and has always remained the old Gallic nation with its Basque, Gaelic, Armorican and other ancient elements modified by the Frank and Latin admixture.

Thus the nation is a persistent psychological unit which Nature has been busy developing throughout the world in the most various forms and educating into physical and political unity. Political unity is not the essential factor; it may not yet be realised and yet the nation persists and moves inevitably towards its realisation; it may be destroyed and yet the nation persists and travails and suffers but refuses to be annihilated. In former times the nation was not always a real and vital unit; the tribe, the clan, the commune, the regional people were the living groups. Those unities which in the attempt at national evolution destroyed these older living groups without arriving at a vital nationhood disappeared once the artificial or political unit was broken. But now the nation stands as the one living group-unit of humanity

into which all others must merge or to which they must become subservient. Even old persistent race unities and cultural unities are powerless against it. The Catalonian in Spain, the Breton and Provençal and Alsatian in France, the Welsh in England may cherish the signs of their separate existence; but the attraction of the greater living unity of the Spanish, the French, the British nation has been too powerful to be injured by these persistences. The nation in modern times is practically indestructible, unless it dies from within. Poland, torn asunder and crushed under the heel of three powerful empires, ceased to exist; the Polish nation survived and is once more reconstituted. Alsace after forty years of the German yoke remained faithful to her French nationhood in spite of her affinities of race and language with the conqueror. All modern attempts to destroy by force or break up a nation are foolish and futile, because they ignore this law of the natural evolution. Empires are still perishable political units; the nation is immortal. And so it will remain until a greater living unit can be found into which the nation idea can merge in obedience to a superior attraction.

And then the question arises whether the empire is not precisely that destined unit in course of evolution. The mere fact that at present not the empire, but the nation is the vital unity can be no bar to a future reversal of the relations. Obviously, in order that they may be reversed the empire must cease to be a mere political and become rather a psychological entity. But there have been instances in the evolution of the nation in which the political unity preceded and became a basis for the psychological as in the union of Scotch, English and Welsh to form the British nation. There is no

insurmountable reason why a similar evolution should not take place on a larger scale and an imperial unity be substituted for a national unity. Nature has long been in travail of the imperial grouping, long casting about to give it a greater force of permanence, and the emergence of the conscious imperial ideal all over the earth and its attempts, though still crude, violent and blundering, to substitute itself for the national, may not irrationally be taken as the precursory sign of one of those rapid leaps and transitions by which she so often accomplishes what she has long been gradually and tentatively preparing. This then is the possibility we have next to consider before we examine the established phenomenon of nationhood in relation to the ideal of human unity. Two different ideals and therefore two different possibilities were precipitated much nearer to realisation by the European conflict,—a federation of free nations and, on the other hand, the distribution of the earth into a few great empires or imperial hegemonies. A practical combination of the two ideas became the most tangible possibility of the not distant future. It is necessary to pause and consider whether, one element of this possible combination being already a living unit, the other also could not under certain circumstances be converted into a living unit and the combination, if realised, made the foundation of an enduring new order of things. Otherwise it could be no more than a transient device without any possibility of a stable permanence.

CHAPTER VI

ANCIENT AND MODERN METHODS OF EMPIRE

A CLEAR distinction must be made between two political aggregates which go equally in current language by the name of empire. For there is the homogeneous national and there is the heterogeneous composite empire. In a sense, all empires are composites, at any rate, if we go back to their origins; but in practice there is a difference between the imperial aggregate in which the component elements are not divided from each other by a strong sense of their separate existence in the whole and the imperial aggregate in which this psychological basis of separation is still in vigour. Japan before the absorption of Formosa and Corea was a national whole and an empire only in the honorific sense of the word; after that absorption it became a real and a composite empire. Germany again would have been a purely national empire if it had not burdened itself with three minor acquisitions, Alsace, Poland and Schleswig-Holstein which were not united to it by the sense of German nationality but only by military force. Let us suppose this Teutonic aggregate to have lost its foreign elements and at most have acquired instead the Teutonic provinces of Austria. Then we should have had an example of a homogeneous aggregate which would yet be an empire in the honorific sense of the word; for that would be a composite of homogeneous Teutonic nations or, as we may conveniently

call them sub-nations, which would not naturally harbour any sentiment of separatism, but rather, drawn always to a natural unity, would form easily and inevitably a psychological and not merely a political unit.

But this form in its purity is now difficult to find. The United States are the example of such an aggregate, although from the accident of their rule by a periodically elected President and not a hereditary monarch we do not associate the type with the idea of an empire at all. Still if the imperial aggregate is to be changed from a political to a psychological unit, it would seem that it must be done by reproducing *mutatis mutandis* something of the system of the United States, a system in which each element could preserve a sufficient local State independence and separate power of legislative and executive action and yet be part of an inseparable greater aggregate. This could be effected most easily where the elements are fairly homogeneous as it would be in a federation of Great Britain and her colonies.

A tendency to large homogeneous aggregations has shown itself recently in political thought, as in the dream of a Pan-Germanic Empire, a great Russian and Pan-Slavic Empire or the Pan-Islamic idea of a united Mahomedan world.¹ But these tendencies are usually associated with the control by this homogeneous aggregate over other elements heterogeneous to it under the old principle of military and political compulsion, the

¹ All three have been broken by the effect of revolution and war, but, if the nation idea dwindled, the last might still at some future date revive: the second, if Communism destroyed the national idea, may still be a possibility.

retention by Russia of Asiatic nations under her sway,¹ the seizure by Germany of wholly or partially non-Germanic countries and provinces, the control by the Caliphate of non-Moslem subjects.² Even if these anomalies were absent, the actual arrangement of the world would lend itself with difficulty to a remodelling of empire on a racial or cultural basis. Vast aggregates of this kind would find enclaves in their dominion inhabited by elements wholly heterogeneous to them or mixed. Quite apart therefore from the resistance and refusal of kindred nations to renounce their cherished nationality and fuse themselves in combinations of this kind, there would be this incompatibility of mixed or heterogeneous factors, recalcitrant to the idea and the culture that sought to absorb them. Thus a Pan-Slavonic empire would necessitate the control of the Balkan Peninsula by Russia as the premier Slav State; but such a scheme would have to meet not only the independent Serbian nationality and the imperfect Slavism of the Bulgar but the quite incompatible Rumanian, Greek and Albanian elements. Thus it does not appear that this tendency towards vast homogeneous aggregates, although it has for some time played an important part in the world's history and is not exhausted or finally baffled, is ever likely to be the eventual solution; for even if it triumphed, it would have to meet in a greater

¹ This has been modified by the substitution of a Soviet Union claiming to unite these Asiatic peoples voluntarily with Russia: but one is not quite sure whether this is a permanent reality or only a temporary apparent phenomenon.

² These two empires have now disappeared and there seems to be no possibility of their revival.

or less degree the difficulties of the heterogeneous type. The true problem of empire therefore still remains, how to transform the artificial political unity of a heterogeneous empire, heterogeneous in racial composition, language and culture, into a real and psychological unity.

History gives us only one great and definite example of an attempt to solve this problem on this large scale and with antecedent conditions which could at all afford any guidance for the vast heterogeneous modern empires, those of Russia, England,¹ France to which the problem is now offered. The old Chinese empire of the five nations, admirably organised, was not a case in point; for all its constituent parts were Mongolian in race and presented no formidable cultural difficulties. But the imperial Roman had to face essentially the same problems as the moderns minus one or two very important complications and he solved them up to a certain point with a masterly success. His empire endured through several centuries and, though often threatened with disruption, yet by its inner principle of unity and by its overpowering centripetal attraction triumphed over all disruptive tendencies. Its one failure was the bisection into the Eastern and Western empires which hastened its final ending. Still when that end came it was not by a disruption from within but simply by the decaying of its centre of life. And it was not till this central life faded that the pressure of the barbarian world without, to

¹ This empire has so altered its form into that of a free Commonwealth that the objection is no longer relevant; there is no longer an old-world empire but a free Commonwealth and a number of subject peoples moving rapidly towards self-government.

which its ruin is wrongly attributed, could prevail over its magnificent solidarity.

The Roman effected his sway by military conquest and military colonisation; but once that conquest was assured, he was not content with holding it together as an artificial political unity, nor did he trust solely to that political convenience of a good, efficient and well-organised government economically and administratively beneficent which made it at first acceptable to the conquered peoples. He had too sure a political instinct to be so easily satisfied; for it is certain that if he had stopped short there, the empire would have broken up at a much earlier date. The peoples under his sway would have preserved their sense of separate nationality and, once accustomed to Roman efficiency and administrative organisation, would inevitably have tended to the separate enjoyment of these advantages as independent organised nations. It was this sense of separate nationality which the Roman rule succeeded in blotting out wherever it established its own dominant influence. And this was done not by the stupid expedient of a brutal force after the Teutonic fashion, but by a peaceful pressure. Rome first compounded with the one rival culture that was superior in certain respects to her own and accepted it as part of her own cultural existence and even as its most valuable part; she created a Graeco-Roman civilisation, left the Greek tongue to spread and secure it in the East, but introduced it everywhere else by the medium of the Latin language and a Latin education and succeeded in peacefully overcoming the decadent or inchoate cultures of Gaul and her other conquered provinces. But since even this process might not have been sufficient to abolish all separatist tendency,

she not only admitted her Latinised subjects to the highest military and civil offices and even to the imperial purple, so that within less than a century after Augustus, first an Italian Gaul and then an Iberian Spaniard held the name and power of the Caesars, but she proceeded rapidly enough to deprive of all vitality and then even nominally to abolish all the grades of civic privilege with which she had started and extended the full Roman citizenship to all her subjects, Asiatic, European and African, without distinction.

The result was that the whole empire became psychologically and not only politically a single Graeco-Roman unity. Not only superior force or the recognition of Roman peace and good government, but all the desires, associations, pride, cultural affinities of the provinces made them firmly attached to the maintenance of the empire. Every attempt of provincial ruler or military chief to start provincial empires for their own benefit failed because it found no basis, no supporting tendency, no national sentiment and no sense of either material or any other advantage to be gained by the change in the population on whom the successful continuity of the attempt had to depend. So far the Roman succeeded; where he failed, it was due to the essential vice of his method. By crushing out, however peacefully, the living cultures or the incipient individuality of the peoples he ruled, he deprived the peoples of their sources of vitality, the roots of their force. No doubt, he removed all positive causes of disruption and secured a passive force of opposition to all disruptive change; but his empire lived only at the centre and when that centre tended to become exhausted, there was no positive and abounding life throughout the body from which it could

be replenished. In the end Rome could not even depend on a supply of vigorous individuals from the peoples whose life she had pressed out under the weight of a borrowed civilisation; she had to draw on the frontier barbarians. And when she fell to pieces, it was these barbarians and not the old peoples resurgent who became her heirs. For their barbarism was at least a living force and a principle of life, but the Graeco-Roman civilisation had become a principle of death. All the living forces were destroyed by whose contact it could have modified and renewed its own force. In the end it had itself to be destroyed in its form and its principle resown in the virgin field of the vital and vigorous culture of mediaeval Europe. What the Roman had not the wisdom to do by his organised empire,—for even the profoundest and surest political instinct is not wisdom,—had to be done by Nature herself in the loose but living unity of mediaeval Christendom.

The example of Rome has haunted the political imagination of Europe ever since. Not only has it been behind the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne and Napoleon's gigantic attempt and the German dream of a world-empire governed by Teutonic efficiency and Teutonic culture, but all the imperial nations, including France and England, have followed to a certain extent in its footsteps. But, significantly enough, every attempt at renewing the Roman success has failed. The modern nations have not been able to follow Rome completely in the lines she had traced out or if they tried to follow, have clashed against different conditions and either collapsed or been obliged to call a halt. It is as if Nature had said, "That experiment has been carried once to the logical consequences and once is enough. I have

made new conditions; find you new means or at least mend and add to the old where they were deficient or went astray."

The European nations have extended their empires by the old Roman method of military conquest and colonisation, abandoning for the most part the pre-Roman principle of simple overlordship or hegemony which was practised by the Assyrian and Egyptian kings, the Indian States and the Greek cities. But this principle also has been sometimes used in the shape of the protectorate to prepare the more normal means of occupation. The colonies have not been of the pure Roman, but of a mixed Carthaginian and Roman type, official and military, enjoying like the Roman colonies superior civic rights to the indigenous population, they have been at the same time and far more commercial colonies of exploitation. The nearest to the Roman type has been the English settlement in Ulster, while the German system in Poland developed under modern conditions the old Roman principle of expropriation. But these are exceptions, not the rule.

The conquered territory once occupied and secure, the modern nations have found themselves brought up short by a difficulty which they have not been able to surmount as the Romans surmounted it,—the difficulty of uprooting the indigenous culture and with it the indigenous sense of separateness. All these empires have at first carried with them the idea of imposing their culture along with the flag, first simply as an instinct of the conqueror and as a necessary adjunct to the fact of political domination and a security for its permanence, but latterly with the conscious intention of extending, as it is somewhat pharisaically put, the benefits of

civilisation to the "inferior" races. It cannot be said that the attempt has anywhere been very prosperous. It was tried with considerable thoroughness and ruthlessness in Ireland, but although the Irish speech was stamped out except in the wilds of Connaught and all distinctive signs of the old Irish culture disappeared, the outraged nationality simply clung to whatever other means of distinctiveness it could find, however exiguous, its Catholic religion, its Celtic race and nationhood, and even when it became Anglicised, refused to become English. The removal or slackening of the foreign pressure has resulted in a violent recoil, an attempt to revive the Gaelic speech, to reconstitute the old Celtic spirit and culture. The German failed to prussianise Poland or even his own kin who speak his own language, the Alsatians. The Finn remained unconquerably Finnish in Russia. The mild Austrian methods left the Austrian Pole as Polish as his oppressed brother in German Posen. Accordingly, there began to rise everywhere a growing sense of the inutility of the endeavour and the necessity of leaving the soul of the subject nation free, confining the action of the sovereign State to the enforcement of new administrative and economic conditions with as much social and cultural change as may be freely accepted or may come about by education and the force of circumstance.

The German, indeed, new and inexperienced in imperial methods, clung to the old Roman idea of assimilation which he sought to execute both by Roman and by un-Roman means. He showed even a tendency to go back beyond the Caesars of old, to the methods of the Jew in Canaan and the Saxon in Eastern Britain, methods of expulsion and massacre. But since he was, after all, modernised and had some sense of economic

necessity and advantage, he could not carry out this policy with any thoroughness or in times of peace. Still he insisted on the old Roman method, sought to substitute German speech and culture for the indigenous and, as he could not do it by peaceful pressure, he tried it by force. An attempt of this kind is bound to fail; instead of bringing about the psychological unity at which it aims, it succeeds only in accentuating the national spirit and plants a rooted and invincible hatred which is dangerous to the empire and may even destroy it if the opposed elements are not too small in number and weak in force. And if this effacing of heterogeneous cultures is impossible in Europe where the differences are only variations of a common type and there are only small and weak elements to overcome, it is obviously out of the question for those empires which have to deal with great Asiatic and African masses rooted for many centuries in an old and well-formed national culture. If a psychological unity has to be created, it must be by other means.

The impact of different cultures upon each other has not ceased but has rather been accentuated by the conditions of the modern world. But the nature of the impact, the ends towards which it moves and the means by which the ends can most successfully be worked out, are profoundly altered. The earth is in travail now of one common, large and flexible civilisation for the whole human race into which each modern and ancient culture shall bring its contribution and each clearly defined human aggregate shall introduce its necessary element of variation. In the working out of this aim, there must necessarily be some struggle for survival. The fittest to survive will be here all that can best serve the tendencies

Nature is working out in humanity,—not only the tendencies of the hour, but the reviving tendencies of the past and the yet inchoate tendencies of the future. And it will be too all that can best help as liberating and combining forces, best make for adaptation and adjustment and for deliverance of the hidden sense of the great Mother in her strivings. But success in this struggle is worst and not best served by military violence or political pressure. German culture for good or ill was making rapid conquests throughout the world before the rulers of Germany were ill-advised enough to rouse the latent force of opposing ideals by armed violence. And even now that which is essential in it, the State idea and the organisation of the life of the community by the State which is common both to German imperialism and to German socialism, is far more likely to succeed by the defeat of the former in the war than it could have done by its victory in a brute struggle.

This change in the movement and orientation of the world's tendencies points to a law of interchange and adaptation and to the emergence of a new birth out of the meeting of many elements. Only those imperial aggregates are likely to succeed and eventually endure which recognise the new law and shape their organisation to accord with it. Immediate victories of an opposite kind may indeed be gained and violence done to the law; but such present successes are won, as history has repeatedly shown, at the cost of a nation's whole future. The recognition of the new truth had already commenced as a result of increased communication and the widening of knowledge. The value of variations had begun to be acknowledged and the old arrogant claims of this or that culture to impose itself and crush out all others were

losing their force and self-confidence when the old outworn creed suddenly leaped up armed with the German sword to vindicate itself, if it might, before it perished. The only result has been to give added force and clear recognition to the truth it sought to deny. The importance even of the smallest States, Belgium, Serbia,¹ as cultural units in the European whole has been lifted almost to the dignity of a creed. The recognition of the value of Asiatic cultures, confined formerly to the thinker, scholar and artist, has now been brought into the popular mind by association on the battlefield. The theory of "inferior" races, an inferiority and superiority measured by approximation to one's own form of culture, has received what may well turn out to have been its death-blow. The seeds of a new order of things are being rapidly sown in the conscious mentality of the race.

This new turn of the impact of cultures shows itself most clearly where the European and the Asiatic meet. French culture in Northern Africa, English culture in India cease at once to be French or English and become simply the common European civilisation in face of the Asiatic; it is no longer an imperial domination intent to secure itself by assimilation, but continent parleying with continent. The political motive sinks into insignificance; the world-motive takes its place. And in this confrontation it is no longer a self-confident European civilisation that offers its light and good to the semi-barbarous Asiatic and the latter that gratefully accepts a beneficent transformation. Even adaptable Japan, after her first enthusiasm of acceptance, has retained all that is fundamental in her culture, and everywhere else the European

¹ Now Yugoslavia.

current has met the opposition of an inner voice and force which cries halt to its victorious impetus.¹ The East is on the whole, in spite of certain questionings and scruples, willing and, where not wholly willing, forced by circumstances and the general tendency of mankind to accept the really valuable parts of modern European culture, its science, its curiosity, its ideal of universal education and uplift, its abolition of privilege, its broadening, liberalising democratic tendency, its instinct of freedom and equality, its call for the breaking down of narrow and oppressive forms, for air, space, light. But at a certain point the East refuses to proceed farther and that is precisely in the things which are deepest, most essential to the future of mankind, the things of the soul, the profound things of the mind and temperament. Here, again, all points not to substitution and conquest, but to mutual understanding and interchange, mutual adaptation and new formation.

The old idea is not entirely dead and will not die without a last struggle. There are still those who dream of a Christianised India, the English tongue permanently dominating if not replacing the indigenous languages, or the acceptance of European social forms and manners as the necessary precondition for an equal status between a European and Asiatic. But they are those who belong in spirit to a past generation and cannot value the signs of the hour which point to a new era. Christianity, for

¹ There has been a recrudescence of the Europeanising turn in Turkey and in China reinforced by the influence of Bolshevik Russia. Wherever there is a retardatory orthodoxy to overcome, this movement is likely to appear, but only as a passing phase.

instance, has only succeeded where it could apply its one or two features of distinct superiority, the readiness to stoop and uplift the fallen and oppressed where the Hindu bound in the forms of caste would not touch nor succour, its greater swiftness to give relief where it is needed, in a word, the active compassion and helpfulness which it inherited from its parent Buddhism. Where it could not apply this lever, it has failed totally and even this lever it may easily lose; for the soul of India re-awakened by the new impact is beginning to recover its lost tendencies. The social forms of the past are changing where they are unsuited to the new political and economic conditions and ideals or incompatible with the increasing urge towards freedom and equality; but there is no sign that anything but a new Asiatic society broadened and liberalised will emerge from this travail. The signs everywhere are the same; the forces everywhere work in the same sense. Neither France nor England has the power—and they are fast or slowly losing the desire—to destroy and replace the Islamic culture in Africa or the Indian in India. All they can do is to give what they have of value to be assimilated according to the needs and the inner spirit of the older nations.

It was necessary to dwell on this question because it is vital to the future of Imperialism. The replacement of the local by the imperial culture and as far as possible by the speech of the conqueror was essential to the old imperial theory, but the moment that becomes out of question and the very desire of it has to be renounced as impracticable, the old Roman model of empire ceases to be of any avail for the solution of the problem. Something of the Roman lesson remains valid,—those features especially that are essential to the very essence of

imperialism and the meaning of empire; but a new model is demanded. That new model has already begun to evolve in obedience to the requirements of the age; it is the model of the federal or else the confederate empire. The problem we have to consider narrows itself down to this, is it possible to create a securely federated empire of vast extent and composed of heterogeneous races and cultures? And granting that in this direction lies the future, how can such an empire so artificial in appearance be welded into a natural and psychological unit?

CHAPTER VII

THE CREATION OF THE HETEROGENEOUS NATION

THE problem of a federal empire founded on the sole foundation that is firm and secure, the creation of a true psychological unity,—an empire that has to combine heterogeneous elements,—resolves itself into two different factors, the question of the form and the question of the reality which the form is intended to serve. The former is of great practical importance, but the latter alone is vital. A form of unity may render possible, may favour or even help actively to create the corresponding reality, but it can never replace it. And, as we have seen, the true reality is in this order of Nature the psychological, since the mere physical fact of political and administrative union may be nothing more than a temporary and artificial creation destined to collapse irretrievably as soon as its immediate usefulness is over, or the circumstances that favoured its continuance are radically or even seriously altered. The first question, then, that we have to consider is what this reality may be which it is intended to create in the form of a federal empire, and especially we must consider whether it is to be merely an enlargement of the nation-type, the largest successful human aggregate yet evolved by Nature, or a new type of aggregate which is to exceed and must tend to supersede the nation, as that has replaced the tribe, the clan and the city or regional state.

The first natural idea of the human mind in facing such a problem is to favour the idea which most flatters and seems to continue its familiar notions. For the human mind is, in the mass, averse to a radical change of conception. It accepts change most easily when its reality is veiled by the continuation of a habitual form of things or else by a ceremonial, legal, intellectual or sentimental fiction. It is such a fiction that some think to create as a bridge from the nation-idea to the empire-idea of political unity. That which unites men most securely now is the physical unity of a common country to live in and defend, a common economic life dependent on that geographical oneness and the sentiment of the motherland which grows up around the physical and economic fact and either creates a political and administrative unity or keeps it to a secure permanence, once it has been created. Let us then extend this powerful sentiment by a fiction, let us demand of the heterogeneous constituents of the empire that each shall regard not his own physical motherland but the empire as the mother or at least, if he clings to the old sentiment, learn to regard the empire first and foremost as the greater mother. A variation of this idea is the French notion of the mother country, France; all the other possessions of the empire, although in English phraseology they would rather be classed as dependencies in spite of the large share of political rights conceded to them, are to be regarded as colonies of the mother country, grouped together in idea as France beyond the seas and educated to centre their national sentiments around the greatness, glory and loveableness of France the common mother. It is a notion natural to the Celtic-Latin temperament, though alien to the Teutonic, and it is supported by a comparative weakness of race

and colour prejudice and by that remarkable power of attraction and assimilation which the French share with all the Celtic nations.

The power, the often miraculous power of such fictions ought not for a moment to be ignored. They constitute Nature's most common and effective method when she has to deal with her own ingrained resistance to change in her mentalised animal, man. Still there are conditions without which a fiction cannot succeed for long or altogether. It must in the first place be based on a plausible superficial resemblance. It must lead to a realisable fact strong enough either to replace the fiction itself or eventually to justify. And this realisable fact must progressively realise itself and not remain too long in the stage of the formless nebula. There was a time when these conditions were less insistently necessary, a time when the mass of men were more imaginative, unsophisticated, satisfied with a sentiment or an appearance; but as the race advances, it becomes more mentally alive, self-conscious, critical and quick to seize dissonances between fact and pretension. Moreover, the thinker is abroad; his words are listened to and understood to an extent unprecedented in the known history of mankind: and the thinker tends to become more and more an inquisitor, a critic, an enemy of fiction.¹

Is then this fiction based upon a realisable parallel,—in other words, is it true that the true imperial unity when realised will be only an enlarged national unity? or, if

¹ These conditions too may very well soon disappear; for freedom of thought is menaced everywhere and, where there is no freedom of thought, there will be the disappearance of the power of the thinker.

not, what is the realisable fact which this fiction is intended to prepare? There have been plenty of instances in history of the composite nation and, if the parallel is to be accepted as effective, it is such a composite nation on a large scale which it is the business of the federal empire to create. We must, therefore, cast a glance at the most typical instances of the successful composite nation and see how far the parallel applies and whether there are difficulties in the way which point rather to the necessity of a new evolution than to the variation of an old success. To have a just idea of the difficulties may help us to see how they can be overcome.

The instance most before our eyes both of the successfully evolved composite or heterogeneous nation and of the fortunately evolving heterogeneous empire is that of the British nation in the past and the British Empire in the present,—successfully, but, fortunately, with a qualification; for it is subject to the perils of a mass of problems yet unsolved.¹ The British nation has been composed of an English-speaking Anglo-Norman England, a Welsh-speaking Cymric Wales, a half-Saxon, half-Gaelic English-speaking Scotland and very imperfectly, very partially, of a Gaelic Ireland with a mainly Anglo-Scotch colony that held it indeed by force to the united body but was never able to compel a true union. Ireland was, until recently, the element of failure in this formation and it is only now and under another form and under other circumstances than its other members that some kind of unity with the whole, still very precarious, and

¹ It must be remembered that this was written some decades ago and circumstances and the Empire itself have wholly changed; the problem, as it was then, no longer poses itself.

with the empire, not with the British nation, is becoming possible, although even yet it has hardly begun to be real.¹ What were the determining circumstances of this general success and this partial failure and what light do they shed on the possibilities of the larger problem?

In building up her human aggregates, Nature has followed in general principle the same law that she observes in her physical aggregates. She has provided first a natural body, next a common life and vital interest for the constituents of the body, last a conscious mind or sense of unity and a centre or governing organ through which that common ego-sense can realise itself and act. There must be in her ordinary process either a common bond of descent or past association that will enable like to adhere to like and distinguish itself from unlike and a common habitation, a country so disposed that all who inhabit within its natural boundaries are under a sort of geographical necessity to unite. In earlier times when communities were less firmly rooted to the soil, the first of these conditions was the more important. In settled modern communities the second predominates; but the unity of the race, pure or mixed—for it need not have been one in its origin—remains a factor of importance, and strong disparity and difference may easily create serious difficulties in the way of the geographical necessity imposing itself with any permanence. In order that it may impose itself, there must be a considerable force of the second natural condition, that is to say, a necessity of economic unity or habit of common sustenance and a necessity

¹ This was written when Home Rule seemed to be a possible solution; the failure has now become a settled fact and Ireland has become the independent Republic of Ireland.

of political unity or habit of common vital organisation for survival, functioning and aggrandisement. And in order that this second condition may fulfil itself in complete force, there must be nothing to depress or destroy the third in its creation or its continuance. Nothing must be done which will have the result of emphasising disunity in sentiment or perpetuating the feeling of separateness from the totality of the rest of the organism; for that will tend to make the centre or governing organ psychologically unrepresentative of the whole and therefore not a true centre of its ego-sense. But we must remember that separatism is not the same thing as particularism which may well coexist with unity; it is the sentiment of the impossibility of true union that separates, not the mere fact of difference.

The geographical necessity of union was obviously present in the forming of the British nation; the conquest of Wales and Ireland and the union with Scotland were historical events which merely represented the working of this necessity; but the unity of race and past association were wholly absent and had with greater or less difficulty to be created. It was effected successfully with Wales and Scotland in a greater or less lapse of time, not at all with Ireland. Geographical necessity is only a relative force; it can be overridden by a powerful sentiment of disunion when nothing is done effectively to dissolve the disintegrating impulsion. Even when the union has been politically effected, it tends to be destroyed, especially when there is within the geographical unity a physical barrier or line of division sufficiently strong to be the base of conflicting economic interests,—as in that which divides Belgium and Holland, Sweden and Norway, Ireland and Great Britain. In the case of Ireland, the British

rulers not only did nothing to bridge over or dissolve this line of economic division and counteract the sentiment of a separate body, a separate physical country, in the Irish mind, but by a violent miscalculation of cause and effect they emphasised both in the strongest possible manner.

In the first place, the economic life and prosperity of Ireland were deliberately crushed in the interests of British trade and commerce. After that it was of little use to bring about, by means which one shrinks from scrutinising, the political "union" of the two islands in a common legislature, a common governing organ; for that governing organ was not a centre of psychological unity. Where the most vital interests were not only different but in conflict, it could only represent the continued control and assertion of the interests of the "predominant partner" and the continued subjection and denial of the interests of the foreign body bound by legislative fetters to the larger mass but not united through a real fusion. The famine which depopulated Ireland while England throve and prospered was Nature's terrible testimony to the sinister character of this "union" which was not unity but the sharpest opposition of the most essential interests. The Irish movements of Home Rule and separatism were the natural and inevitable expression of Ireland's will to survive; they amounted to nothing more than the instinct of self-preservation divining and insisting on the one obvious means of self-preservation.

In human life economic interests are those which are, ordinarily, violated with the least impunity; for they are bound up with the life itself and the persistent violation of them, if it does not destroy the oppressed organism, provokes necessarily the bitterest revolt and

ends in one of Nature's inexorable retaliations. But in the third order of the natural conditions also British statesmanship in Ireland committed an equally radical mistake in its attempt to get rid by violence of all elements of Irish particularism. Wales like Ireland was acquired by conquest, but no such elaborate attempt was made to assimilate it; after the first unease that follows a process of violence, after one or two abortive attempts at resistance, Wales was left to undergo the peaceful pressure of natural conditions and its preservation of its own race and language has been no obstacle to the gradual union of the Cymric race and the Saxon in a common British nationality. A similar non-interference, apart from the minor problem of the Highland clans, has resulted in a still more rapid fusion of the Scotch race with the English. There is now in the island of Great Britain a composite British race with a common country bound together by the community of mingled blood, by a settled past association in oneness, by geographical necessity, by a common political and economic interest, by the realisation of a common ego. The opposite process in Ireland, the attempt to substitute an artificial process where the working of natural conditions with a little help of management and conciliation would have sufficed, the application of old-world methods to a new set of circumstances has resulted in the opposite effect. And when the error was discovered, the result of the past Karma had to be recognised and the union has had to be effected through the method demanded by Irish interests and Irish particularist sentiments, first by the offer of Home Rule and then by the creation of the Free State and not under a complete legislative union.

This result may well reach beyond itself; it may create the necessity of an eventual remodelling of the British Empire and perhaps of the whole Anglo-Celtic nation on new lines with the principle of federation at the base. For Wales and Scotland have not been fused into England with the same completeness as Breton, Alsatian, Basque and Provençal were fused into the indivisible unity of France. Although no economic interest, no pressing physical necessity demands the application of the federative principle to Wales and Scotland, yet a sufficient though minor particularist sentiment remains that may yet feel hereafter the repercussion of the Irish settlement and awake to the satisfaction and convenience of a similar recognition for the provincial separateness of these two countries. And this sentiment is bound to receive fresh strength and encouragement by the practical working out of the federative principle in the reorganisation, which one day may become inevitable, of the colonial empire hitherto governed by Great Britain on the basis of Home Rule without federation.¹ The peculiar circumstances both of the national and the colonial formation and expansion of the races inhabiting the British Isles have indeed been such as to make it almost appear that this Empire has throughout been intended and prepared by Nature in her workings to be the great field of experiment for the creation of this new type in the history of human aggregates, the heterogeneous federal empire.

¹ Home Rule now replaced by Dominion Status which means a confederation in fact though not yet in form.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROBLEM OF A FEDERATED HETEROGENEOUS EMPIRE

IF the building up of a composite nation in the British Isles was from the beginning a foregone conclusion, a geographical and economical necessity only prevented in its entire completion by the most violent and perverse errors of statesmanship, the same cannot be said of the swifter, but still gradual and almost unconscious process by which the colonial empire of Great Britain has been evolving to a point at which it can become a real unity. It was not so long ago that the eventual separation of the colonies carrying with it the evolution of Australia and Canada at least into young independent nations was considered the inevitable end of the colonial empire, its one logical and hardly regrettable conclusion.

There were sound reasons for this mental attitude. The geographical necessity of union was entirely absent; on the contrary, distance created a positive mental separation. Each colony had a clear-cut separate physical body and seemed predestined, on the lines on which human evolution was then running, to become a separate nation. The economic interests of the mother country and the colonies were disparate, aloof from each other, often opposite as was shown by the adoption by the latter of Protection as against the British policy of Free Trade. Their sole political interest in the Empire was the safety

given by the British fleet and army against foreign invasion; they did not share and took no direct interest in the government of the Empire or the shaping of its destinies. Psychologically, the sole tie was a frail memory of origin and a tepid sentiment which might easily evaporate and which was combated by a definite separatist sentiment and the natural inclination of strongly marked human groupings to make for themselves an independent life and racial type. The race origin varied, in Australia British, in South Africa predominantly Dutch, in Canada half French, half English; but in all three countries habits of life, political tendencies, a new type of character and temperament and culture, if it can be so called, were being developed which were as the poles asunder from the old British culture, temperament, habits of life and social and political tendencies. On the other hand, the mother country derived no tangible political, military or economic advantage from these offshoots, only the prestige which the possession of an empire in itself could give her. On both sides, therefore, all the circumstances pointed to an eventual peaceful separation which would leave England only the pride of having been the mother of so many new nations.

Owing to the drawing together of the world by physical Science, the resulting tendency towards larger aggregates, changed political world conditions and the profound political, economic and social changes towards which Great Britain has been moving, all the conditions now are altered and it is easy to see that the fusion of the colonial empire into a great federated Commonwealth or something that can plausibly go by that name is practically inevitable. There are difficulties in the way,—economic difficulties, to begin with; for, as we

have seen, geographical separation does tend towards a divergence, often an opposition of economic interests, and an imperial Zollverein, natural enough between the States of the German Empire or a Central European Confederation such as was planned by one side in the great war, would be an artificial creation as between widely separated countries and would need constant vigilance and tender handling; yet, at the same time, political unity tends to demand economic union as its natural concomitant and seems to itself hardly complete without it. Political and other difficulties also there are which may yet become manifest and destroy the imperial formation if the practical process of unification is rashly and unwisely handled; but none of these need be insuperable or even a real stumbling-block. The race difficulty which was at one time serious and menacing in South Africa and is not yet eliminated, need not be more formidable than in Canada; for in both countries there is the English element, which whether a majority or minority, can by friendly union or fusion attach the foreign element to the Empire. Nor is there any such powerful outside attraction or clash of formed cultures or incompatible temperaments as made so difficult the real union of the Austrian Empire.

All that is needed is that England should continue to handle the problem with a right instinct and not commit anything like her fatal American blunder or the mistake she committed but fortunately receded from in South Africa. She has to keep it always in mind that her possible destiny is not that of a dominant country compelling all the parts of her dominions to uniformity with her or to perpetual subordination, but that of the centre of a great confederation of States and nations coalescing

by her attraction into a new supra-national unity. Here the first condition is that she must scrupulously respect the free internal life and will, the social, cultural, economic tendencies of the colonies while giving them an equal part with herself in the management of the great common questions of the Empire. She herself can be nothing more in the future of such a new type of aggregate than a political and cultural centre, the clamp or nodus of the union. Given this orientation of the governing mind in England, nothing short of some unforeseen cataclysm can prevent the formation of an empire-unit in which Home Rule with a loose British suzerainty will be replaced by Federation with Home Rule as its basis.¹

But the problem becomes much more difficult when the question of the other two great constituent parts of the Empire arises, Egypt and India,—so difficult that the first temptation of the political mind, supported by a hundred prejudices and existing interests, was naturally to leave the problem alone and create a federated colonial empire with these two great countries as subject dependencies.² It is obvious that such a solution could

¹ All this, provided the Empire continues to be victorious and prosper; provided, too, Britain's foreign policy does not make the obligations of federated unity too irksome to the smaller members.

² The question of Egypt has already been settled since the above was written, and in a sense adverse to union. India, already even then on the road to a free status, has already achieved it, although its two separating parts have figured for a time as dominions and one of them may possibly adhere for some time to that status while the other has adopted, although an independent Republic, a new formula of adhesion to the Commonwealth.

not last and, if obstinately persisted in, would lead to the most undesirable results, if not to eventual disaster. The renascence of India is as inevitable as the rising of tomorrow's sun, and the renascence of a great nation of three hundred millions with so peculiar a temperament, such unique traditions and ideas of life, so powerful an intelligence and so great a mass of potential energies cannot but be one of the most formidable phenomena of the modern world. It is evident that the new federated empire-unit cannot afford to put itself in permanent antagonism to this nascent nation of three hundred millions and that the short-sighted statesmanship of those servants of today and its interest who would stave off the inevitable issue as long as possible cannot be allowed to prevail. This has indeed been recognised in principle; the difficulty will be in the handling of the problems that will arise when the practical solution of the Indian question can no longer be put off to an uncertain future.

The nature of the difficulties in the way of a practical union between such different aggregates is sufficiently obvious. There is first that geographical separateness which has always made India a country and a people apart, even when it was unable to realise its political unity and was receiving by invasion and mutual communication of cultures the full shock of the civilisations around it. There is the mere mass of its population of three hundred millions whose fusion in any sort with the rest of the nations of the Empire would be a far other matter than the fusion of the comparatively insignificant populations of Australia, Canada and South Africa. There is the salient line of demarcation by race, colour and temperament between the European and the Asiatic. There is the age-long past, the absolute divergence of origins,

indelible associations, inherent tendencies which forbid any possibility of the line of demarcation being effaced or minimised by India's acceptance of an entirely or predominantly English or European culture. All these difficulties need not necessarily mean the insolubility of the problem; on the contrary, we know that no difficulty can be presented to the human mind which the human mind, if it will, cannot solve. We will assume that in this case there will be both the will and the necessary wisdom; that British statesmanship will commit no irreparable error; that from the minor errors which it cannot fail to commit in the handling of such a problem, it will retreat in time, as has been its temperament and habit in the past; and that, accordingly, a little sooner or a little later some kind of psychological unity may possibly be created between these two widely disparate aggregates of the human race.

The question remains under what conditions this is possible and of what nature the unity will be. It is clear that the governing race must apply with a far greater scrupulosity and firm resolution the principle it has already applied elsewhere with such success and the departure from which has always after a certain stage been so detrimental to its own wider interests. It must allow, respect and even favour actively the free and separate evolution of India subject to the unity of the Empire. So long as India does not entirely govern herself, her interests must take a first place in the mind of those who do govern her, and when she has self-government, it must be of a kind which will not hamper her in her care of her own interests. She must not, for example, be forced into an imperial Zollverein which under present conditions would be disastrous to

her economic future until or unless these conditions are changed by a resolute policy of stimulating and encouraging her industrial development, even though that will necessarily be prejudicial to many existing commercial interests within the Empire. No effort must be made to impose English culture or conditions upon her growing life or make them a *sine qua non* for her recognition among the free peoples of the Empire and no effort of her own to defend and develop her own culture and characteristic development must be interfered with or opposed. Her dignity, sentiments, national aspirations must be increasingly recognised in practice as well as in principle. Given these conditions, the security of her political and economic interests and a care for her own untroubled growth might keep her in the Empire and time might be given for the rest, for the more subtle and difficult part of the process of unification to fulfil itself more or less rapidly.

The unity created could never take the form of an Indo-British Empire; that is a figment of the imagination, a chimera which it would never do to hunt to the detriment of the real possibilities. The possibilities might be first, a firm political unity secured by common interests; secondly, a sound commercial interchange and mutual industrial helpfulness on healthy lines; thirdly, a new cultural relation of the two most important sections of humanity, Europe and Asia, in which they could exchange all that is great and valuable in either as equal members of one human household; and finally, it might be hoped, in place of the common past associations of political and economical development and military glory which have chiefly helped in building up the nation-unit, the greater glory of association and close partnership

in the building of a new, rich and various culture for the life of a nobler humanity. For such, surely, should be the type of the supra-national unit which is the possible next step in the progressive aggregation of humanity.

It is evident that this next step would have no reason or value except as a stage which would make possible by practical demonstration and the creation of new habits of sentiment, mental attitude and common life the unity of the whole human race in a single family. The mere creation of a big empire-unit would be a vulgar and even reactionary phenomenon if it had not this greater issue beyond it. The mere construction of a multi-coloured Indo-British unity arrayed in armour of battle and divided by commercial, political and military egoism from other huge unities, Russian, French, German, American, would be a retrogression, not an advance. If at all, therefore, this kind of development is destined,—for we have only taken the instance of the British Empire as the best example of a possible new type—then it must be as such a half-way house and with this ideal before us that it can be accepted by the lovers of humanity who are not bound by the limitations of the old local patriotism of nation against nation. Always provided that the political and administrative means are those which are to lead us to the unity of the human race,—for on that doubtful hypothesis we are at present proceeding. The probability of such an eventual development is as yet scanty, for the temper both of Muslim and Hindu India is still overwhelmingly in the direction of independence and nothing has been done on the English side to build up the other possibility. But the possibility had still to be considered, as it is not utterly out of question that under changed conditions there

might be an acceptance of virtual independence in place of a separate and isolated autonomy. If so, it would be a sign that one of Nature's steps towards the final result was leading towards this passage. This much could be said for it that if such a combination of two so disparate peoples and cultures proved to be possible, the greater question of a world-union would begin to bear a less remote appearance.¹

¹ Things have taken, as was practically inevitable all through, a different turn; but this part of the chapter has been left as it was because the consideration of this possibility was necessary to the theme. The failure of that possible experiment to come anywhere near realisation is an illustration of the fact that this intermediate stage in the progress towards a total world-union presents difficulties which make it almost impossible. Its place has been taken by such agglomerations as the Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and such possibilities as the proposed United States of Europe and other continental combinations such as are coming into being as between the two Americas and may some day be possible in Asia.

CHAPTER IX

THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD-EMPIRE

THE progress of the imperial idea from the artificial and constructive stage to the position of a realised psychological truth controlling the human mind with the same force and vitality which now distinguish the national idea above all other group motives, is only a possibility, not a certainty of the future. It is even no more than a vaguely nascent possibility and so long as it has not emerged from this inchoate condition in which it is at the mercy of the much folly of statesmen, the formidable passions of great human masses, the obstinate self-interest of established egoisms, we can have no surety that it will not even now die still-born. And if so, what other possibility can there be of the unification of mankind by political and administrative means? That can only come about if either the old ideal of a single world empire be, by developments not now apparently possible, converted into an accomplished fact or if the opposite ideal of a free association of free nations overcome the hundred and one powerful obstacles which stand in the way of its practical realisation.

The idea of a world-empire imposed by sheer force is in direct opposition, as we have seen, to the new conditions which the progressive nature of things has introduced into the modern world. Nevertheless, let us isolate these new conditions from the problem and admit the theoretical possibility of a single great nation imposing its political rule and its predominant culture on the

whole earth as Rome once imposed hers on the Mediterranean peoples and on Gaul and Britain. Or let us even suppose that one of the great nations might possibly succeed in overcoming all its rivals by force and diplomacy and afterwards, respecting the culture and separate internal life of its subject nations, secure its sway by the attraction of a world-peace, of beneficent administration and of an unparalleled organisation of human knowledge and human resources for the amelioration of the present state of mankind. We have to see whether this theoretical possibility is at all likely to encounter the conditions by which it can convert itself into a practical possibility, and if we consider, we shall find that no such conditions now exist: on the contrary, all are against the realisation of such a colossal dream—it could only come about by immense changes as yet hidden in the secrecy of the future.

It is commonly supposed that the impulse which brought Germany to her recent struggle with the world was rooted in even such a dream of empire. How far there was any such conscious intention in her directing minds is a question open to some doubt; but it is certain that, if she had prevailed in the war as she had first expected, the situation created would inevitably have led her to this greater endeavour. For she would have enjoyed a dominant position such as no nation has yet possessed during the known period of the world's history; and the ideas which have recently governed the German intellect, the idea of her mission, her race superiority, the immeasurable excellence of her culture, her science, her organisation of life and her divine right to lead the earth and to impose on it her will and her ideals, these with the all-grasping spirit of modern commercialism would have

inevitably impelled her to undertake universal domination as a divinely given task. The fact that a modern nation and indeed the nation most advanced in that efficiency, that scientific utilisation of Science, that spirit of organisation, State help and intelligent dealing with national and social problems and ordering of economic well-being which Europe understands by the word civilisation,—the fact that such a nation should be possessed and driven by such ideas and impulses is certainly a proof that the old gods are not dead, the old ideal of dominant Force conquering, governing and perfecting the world is still a vital reality and has not let go its hold on the psychology of the human race. Nor is there any certainty that the recent war has killed these forces and this ideal; for the war was decided by force meeting force, by organisation triumphing over organisation, by the superior or at any rate the more fortunate utilisation of those very weapons which constituted the real strength of the great aggressive Teutonic Power. The defeat of Germany by her own weapons could not of itself kill the spirit then incarnate in Germany; it may well lead merely to a new incarnation of it, perhaps in some other race or empire, and the whole battle would then have to be fought over again. So long as the old gods are alive, the breaking or depression of the body which they animate is a small matter, for they know well how to transmigrate. Germany overthrew the Napoleonic spirit in France in 1813 and broke the remnants of her European leadership in 1870; the same Germany became the incarnation of that which it had overthrown. The phenomenon is easily capable of renewal on a more formidable scale.

Nor was the failure of Germany any more a proof of the impossibility of this imperial dream than the previous

THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD-EMPIRE

failure of Napoleon. For the Teutonic combination lacked all the necessary conditions except one for the success of so vast an aim. It had the strongest military, scientific and national organisation which any people has yet developed, but it lacked the gigantic driving impulse which could alone bring an attempt so colossal to fruition, the impulse which France possessed in a much greater degree in the Napoleonic era. It lacked the successful diplomatic genius which creates the indispensable conditions of success. It lacked the companion force of sea-power which is even more necessary than military superiority to the endeavour of world-domination, and by its geographical position and the encircling position of its enemies it was especially open to all the disadvantages which must accompany the mastery of the seas by its natural adversary. The combination of overwhelming sea-power with overwhelming land-power¹ can alone bring so vast an enterprise into the domain of real possibility; Rome itself could only hope for something like a world-empire when it had destroyed the superior maritime force of Carthage. Yet so entirely did German statesmanship miscalculate the problem that it entered into the struggle with the predominant maritime power of the world already ranked in the coalition of its enemies. Instead of concentrating its efforts against this one natural adversary, instead of utilising the old hostility of Russia and France against England, its maladroit and brutal diplomacy had already leagued these former enemies against itself; instead of isolating England, it had succeeded only in isolating

¹ But now also, in a far greater degree, overwhelming air-power.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

itself and the manner in which it began and conducted the war still farther separated it morally and gave an added force to the physical isolation effected by the British blockade. In its one-sided pursuit of a great military concentration of Central Europe and Turkey, it had even wantonly alienated the one maritime Power which might have been on its side.

It is conceivable that the imperial enterprise may be renewed at some future date in the world's history by a nation or by statesmen better situated, better equipped, gifted with a subtler diplomatic genius, a nation as much favoured by circumstances, temperament and fortune as was Rome in the ancient world. What then would be the necessary conditions for its success? In the first place, its aim would have small chances of prospering if it could not repeat that extraordinary good luck by which Rome was enabled to meet its possible rivals and enemies one by one and avoid a successful coalition of hostile forces. What possibility is there of such a fortunate progress in a world so alert and instructed as the modern where everything is known, spied on, watched by jealous eyes and active minds under the conditions of modern publicity and swift world-wide communication? The mere possession of a dominant position is enough to set the whole world on its guard and concentrate its hostility against the Power whose secret ambitions it instinctively feels. Therefore such a fortunate succession would only seem to be possible if, in the first place, it were carried out half unconsciously without any fixed and visible ambition on the part of the advancing Power to awaken the general jealousy and, secondly, by a series of favouring occurrences which would lead so near to the desired end that it would be

THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD-EMPIRE

within the grasp before those who could still prevent it had awakened to its possibility. If, for instance, there were a series of struggles between the four or five great Powers now dominating the world, each of which left the aggressor broken without hope of recovery and without any new Power arising to take its place, it is conceivable that at the end one of them would be left in a position of such natural predominance gained without any deliberate aggression, gained at least apparently in resisting the aggression of others as to put world-empire naturally into its grasp. But with the present conditions of life, especially with the ruinous nature of modern war, such a succession of struggles, quite natural and possible in former times, seems to be beyond the range of actual possibilities.

We must then assume that the Power moving towards world-domination would at some time find inevitably a coalition formed against it by almost all the Powers capable of opposing it and this with the sympathy of the world at their back. Given even the happiest diplomacy, such a moment seems inevitable. It must then possess such a combined and perfectly organised military and naval predominance as to succeed in this otherwise unequal struggle. But where is the modern empire that can hope to arrive at such a predominance? Of those that already exist Russia might well arrive one day at an overwhelming military power to which the present force of Germany would be a trifle; but that it should combine with this force by land a corresponding sea-power is unthinkable. England has enjoyed hitherto an overwhelming naval predominance which it might so increase under certain conditions as to defy the world.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

in arms;¹ but it could not even with conscription and the aid of all its colonies compass anything like a similar force by land,—unless indeed it created conditions under which it could utilise all the military possibilities of India. Even then we have only to think of the formidable masses and powerful empires that it must be prepared to meet and we shall see that the creation of this double predominance is a contingency which the facts themselves show to be, if not chimerical, at least highly improbable.

Given even largely superior numbers on the side of its possible enemies, a nation might conceivably prevail over the coalition of its opponents by a superior science and a more skilful use of its resources. Germany relied on its superior science for the successful issue of its enterprise; and the principle on which it proceeded was sound. But in the modern world Science is a common possession and even if one nation steals such a march on the others as to leave them in a position of great inferiority at the beginning, yet experience has shown that given a little time,—and a powerful coalition is not likely to be crushed at the first blow—the lost ground can be rapidly made up or at least methods of defence developed which will largely neutralise the advantage gained. For success, therefore, we should have to suppose the development by the ambitious nation or empire of a new science or new discoveries not shared by the rest which would place it in something like the position of superiority over greater numbers which Cortes and Pizarro enjoyed over the Aztecs and Peruvians. The superiority of discipline and organisation which gave

¹ This is no longer true since the enormous increase of the American Navy.

THE POSSIBILITY OF A WORLD-EMPIRE

the advantage to the ancient Romans or to the Europeans in India is no longer sufficient for so vast a purpose.

We see, therefore, that the conditions for the successful pursuit of world-empire are such that we need hardly take this mode of unification as within the bounds of practical possibility. That it may again be attempted, is possible; that it will fail, may almost be prophesied. At the same time, we have to take into account the surprises of Nature, the large field we have to allow to the unexpected in her dealings with us. Therefore we cannot pronounce this consummation an absolute impossibility. On the contrary, if that be her intention, she will suddenly or gradually create the necessary means and conditions. But even if it were to come about, the empire so created would have so many forces to contend with that its maintenance would be more difficult than its creation, and either its early collapse would bring the whole problem again into the field for a better solution or else it would have, by stripping itself of the elements of force and domination which inspired its attempt, to contradict the essential aim of its great effort. That, however, belongs to another side of our subject which we must postpone for the moment. At present we may say that if the gradual unification of the world by the growth of great heterogeneous empires forming true psychological unities is only a vague and nascent possibility, its unification by a single forceful imperial domination has passed or is passing out of the range of possibilities and can only come about by a new development of the unexpected out of the infinite surprises of Nature.

CHAPTER X

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

WE have had to dwell so long upon the possibilities of the Empire-group because the evolution of the imperial State is a dominating phenomenon of the modern world; it governs the political tendencies of the later part of the nineteenth and earlier part of the twentieth centuries very much as the evolution of the free democratised nation governed the age which preceded ours. The dominant idea of the French Revolution was the formula of the free and sovereign people and, in spite of the cosmopolitan element introduced into the revolutionary formula by the ideal of fraternity, this idea became in fact the assertion of the free, independent, democratically self-governed nation. That ideal had not at the time of the great war wholly worked itself out even in the occidental world; for central Europe was only partly democratised and Russia had only just begun to turn its face towards the common goal; and even now there are still subject European peoples or fragments of peoples.¹ Nevertheless, with whatever imperfections, the idea of the free democratic nation had practically triumphed in all America and Europe. The peoples of Asia have equally accepted this governing ideal of the nineteenth century, and though the movements of democratic

¹ No longer an evident fact, although the substitution of a state of vassalage may still be there.

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

nationalism in the eastern countries, Turkey, Persia, India, China, were not fortunate in their first attempts at self-realisation, the profound and wide-spread working of the idea cannot be doubted by any careful observer. Whatever modifications may arrive, whatever new tendencies intervene, whatever reactions oppose, it could hardly then be doubted that the principal gifts of the French Revolution must remain and be universalised as permanent acquisitions, indispensable elements in the future order of the world,—national self-consciousness and self-government, freedom and enlightenment for the people and so much social equality and justice at least as is indispensable to political liberty; for with any form of fixed and rigid inequality democratic self-government is incompatible.

But before the great nineteenth century impulse could work itself out everywhere, before even it could realise itself entirely in Europe, a new tendency has intervened and a new idea seized on the progressive mind of humanity. This is the ideal of the perfectly organised State. Fundamentally, the ideal of the perfectly organised State is socialistic and it is based on the second word of the great revolutionary formula, equality, just as the movement of the nineteenth century centered round the first, liberty. The first impulse given by the great European upheaval attained only to a certain kind of political equality. An incomplete social levelling still left untouched the one inequality and the one form of political preponderance which no competitive society can eliminate, the preponderance of the haves over the have-nots, the inequality between the more successful in the struggle of life and the less successful which is rendered inevitable by difference of capacity, unequal

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

opportunity and the handicap of circumstance and environment. Socialism seeks to get rid of this persistent inequality by destroying the competitive form of society and substituting the co-operative. A co-operative form of human society existed formerly in the shape of the commune; but the restoration of the commune as a unit would imply practically the return to the old city state, and as this is not now possible with the larger groupings and greater complexities of modern life, the socialistic idea could only be realised through the rigorously organised national State. To eliminate poverty, not by the crude idea of equal distribution but by the holding of all property in common and its management through the organised State, to equalise opportunity and capacity as far as possible through universal education and training, again by means of the organised State, is the fundamental idea of modern Socialism. It implies an abrogation or at least a rigorous diminution of all individual liberty. Democratic Socialism still clings indeed to the nineteenth century ideal of political freedom; it insists on the equal right of all in the State to choose, judge, and change their own governors, but all other liberty it is ready to sacrifice to its own central idea.

The progress of the socialistic idea would seem therefore to lead towards the evolution of a perfectly organised national State which would provide for and control the education and training, manage and govern all the economic activities and for that purpose as well as for the assurance of perfect efficiency, morality, well-being and social justice, order the whole or at any rate the greater part of the external and internal life of its component individuals. It would effect, in fact, by organised State control what earlier societies attempted

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

by social pressure, rigorous rule of custom, minute code and Shashtra. This was always an inherently inevitable development of the revolutionary ideal. It started to the surface at first under pressure of external danger in the Government of France by the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror; it has been emerging and tending to realise itself under pressure of an inner necessity throughout the later part of the nineteenth century; it has emerged not completely but with a first rudimentary sketch of completeness by the combination of the inner and the outer necessity during the present war. What was before only an ideal towards which some imperfect initial steps alone were immediately possible, has now become a realisable programme with its entire feasibility established by a convincing, though necessarily hasty and imperfect, practical demonstration. It is true that in order to realise it even political liberty has had to be temporarily abolished; but this, it may be argued, is only an accident of the moment, a concession to temporary necessity. In freer conditions what was done partly and for a time by governments which the people have consented to invest with an absolute and temporarily irresponsible authority, may be done, when there is no pressure of war, wholly and permanently by the self-governing democratic State.

In that case the near future of the human group would seem to be the nation, self-governing, politically free, but aiming at perfect social and economic organisation and ready for that purpose to hand over all individual liberty to the control of the organised national State.¹

¹ This was done with a stupendous beginning of thoroughness in Bolshevik Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

As France was in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century the great propagandist and the experimental workshop of political liberty and equality, so Germany has been in the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century the chief propagandist and the experimental workshop of the idea of the organised State. There the theory of Socialism has taken rise and there its propaganda has been most effective, so that a large proportion of the nation committed itself to the new gospel; there also the great socialistic measures and those which have developed the control of the individual by the State for the common good and efficiency of the nation have been most thoroughly and admirably conceived and executed. It matters little that this was done by an anti-socialistic, militarist and aristocratic government; the very fact is a proof of the irresistible strength of the new tendency, and the inevitable transference of the administrative power from its past holders to the people was all that was needed to complete its triumph.

Throughout the recent decades we have seen the growth of German ideas and the increasing tendency to follow the German methods of State interference and State control in other countries, even in England, the home of individualism. The defeat of Germany in the European war no more spelt the defeat of her ideals than the defeat of revolutionary and Napoleonic France by the European coalition and even the temporary triumph of the monarchic and aristocratic system prevented the spread of her new ideas over all Europe. Even if German

the necessity or the choice of it threatened at one time to spread everywhere.

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

militarism and Junkerism was destroyed, the collapse of the imperial form of government can only hasten the more thorough development and victory of that which has been working behind them and forcing them to minister to it, the great modern tendency of the perfectly organised socialistic State, while the evident result of the war in the nations opposed to her has been to force them more rapidly towards the same ideal.

If this were all, the natural development of things aided by the frustration of the German form of imperialism would lead logically to a new ordering of the world on the basis of a system of independent but increasingly organised national States associated together more or less closely for international purposes while preserving their independent existence. Such is the ideal which has attracted the human mind as a yet distant possibility since the great revolutionary ferment set in; it is the idea of a federation of free nations, the parliament of man, the federation of the world. But the actual circumstances forbid any hope of any such ideal consummation in the near future. For the nationalistic, democratic and socialistic ideas are not alone at work in the world; imperialism is equally in the ascendant. Only a few European peoples at the present moment are nations confined to themselves; each is a nation free in itself but dominating over human groupings who are not free or only partially free. Even little Belgium has its Congo, little Portugal its colonies, little Holland its dependencies in the eastern Archipelago; even little Balkan States have aspired to revive an "empire" and to rule over others not of their own nationality or have cherished the idea of becoming predominant in the peninsula. Mazzini's Italy has its imperialistic ventures

and ambitions in Tripoli, Abyssinia, Albania, the Greek islands. This imperialistic tendency is likely to grow stronger for some time in the future rather than to weaken. The idea of a remodelling even of Europe itself on the strict principle of nationality, which captivated liberal minds in England at the beginning of the war, has not yet been made practicable and, if it were effected, there would still remain the whole of Asia and Africa as a field for the imperialistic ambitions of the Western nations and Japan. The disinterestedness that led a majority in America to decree the liberation of the Philippines and restrained the desire to take advantage of the troubles of Mexico is not possible to the mentality of the Old World, and it is doubtful how long it can stand even in America against the rising tide of imperialistic sentiment. National egoism, the pride of domination and the desire of expansion still govern the mind of humanity, however modified they may now be in their methods by the first weak beginnings of higher motives and a better national morality, and until this spirit is radically changed, the union of the human race by a federation of free nations must remain a noble chimera.

Undoubtedly, a free association and unity must be the ultimate goal of our development and until it is realised, the world must be subject to constant changes and revolutions. Every established order, because it is imperfect, because it insists on arrangements which come to be recognised as involving injustice or which stand in the way of new tendencies and forces, because it outlasts its utility and justification, must end in *malaise*, resistance and upheaval, must change itself or be changed or else lead to cataclysms such as periodically trouble our human advance. But the time has not come when the

true principle of order can replace those which are artificial and imperfect. It is idle to hope for a federation of free nations until either the present inequalities between nation and nation are removed or else the whole world rises to a common culture based upon a higher moral and spiritual status than is now actual or possible. The imperial instinct being alive and dominant and stronger at present than the principle of nationalism, the evolution of great empires can hardly fail to overshadow for a time at least the tendency to the development of free nationalities. All that can be hoped is that the old artificial, merely political empire may be replaced by a truer and more moral type, and that the existing empires, driven by the necessity of strengthening themselves and by an enlightened self-interest, may come to see that the recognition of national autonomy is a wise and necessary concession to the still vital instinct of nationalism and can be used so as to strengthen instead of weakening their imperial strength and unity. In this way, while a federation of free nations is for the present impossible, a system of federated empires and free nations drawn together in a closer association than the world has yet seen is not altogether impossible; and through this and other steps some form of political unity for mankind may at a more or less distant date be realisable.¹

The war brought up many suggestions for such a closer association, but as a rule they were limited to a better

¹ The appearance of Hitler and the colossal attempt at German world-domination have paradoxically helped by his defeat, and the reaction against him entirely altered the world circumstances: the United States of Europe is now a practical possibility and has begun to feel towards self-accomplishment.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

ordering of the international relations of Europe. One of these was the elimination of war by a stricter international law administered by an international Court and supported by the sanction of the nations which shall be enforced by all of them against any offender. Such a solution is chimerical unless it is immediately followed up by farther and far-reaching developments. For the law given by the Court must be enforced either by an alliance of some of the stronger Powers as, for instance, the coalition of the victorious allies dominating the rest of Europe, or by a concert of all the European Powers or else by a United States of Europe or some other form of European federation. A dominating alliance of great Powers would be simply a repetition in principle of the system of Metternich and would inevitably break down after some lapse of time, while a Concert of Europe must mean, as experience has shown, the uneasy attempt of rival groupings to maintain a precarious understanding which may postpone but cannot eventually prevent fresh struggles and collisions. In such imperfect systems the law would only be obeyed so long as it was expedient, so long only as the Powers who desired new changes and readjustments not admitted by the others did not consider the moment opportune for resistance. The Law within a nation is only secure because there is a recognised authority empowered to determine it and to make the necessary changes and possessed of a sufficient force to punish all violation of its statutes. An international or an inter-European law must have the same advantages if it is to exercise anything more than a merely moral force which can be set at naught by those who are strong enough to defy it and who find an advantage in the violation. Some form of European

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

federation, however loose, is therefore essential if the idea behind these suggestions of a new order is to be made practically effective, and once commenced, such a federation must necessarily be tightened and draw more and more towards the form of a United States of Europe.

Whether such a European unity can be formed or whether, if formed, it can be maintained and perfected against the many forces of dissolution, the many causes of quarrel which would for long try it to the breaking-point, only experience can show. But it is evident that in the present state of human egoism it would, if formed, become a tremendously powerful instrument for domination and exploitation of the rest of the world by the group of nations which are at present in the forefront of human progress. It would inevitably awaken in antagonism to it an idea of Asiatic unity and an idea of American unity, and while such continental groupings replacing the present smaller national unities might well be an advance towards the final union of all mankind, yet their realisation would mean cataclysms of a kind and scope which would dwarf the present catastrophe and in which the hopes of mankind might founder and fatally collapse rather than progress nearer to fulfilment. But the chief objection to the idea of a United States of Europe is that the general sense of humanity is already seeking to travel beyond its continental distinctions and make them subordinate to a larger human idea. A division on the continental basis might therefore be from this point of view a reactionary step of the gravest kind and might be attended with the most serious consequences to human progress.

Europe, indeed, is in this anomalous position that it is at once ripe for the Pan-European idea and at the same

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

time under the necessity of overpassing it. The conflict of the two tendencies was curiously exemplified not so long ago by certain speculations on the nature of the recent European struggle. It was suggested that the sin of Germany in this war was due to its exaggerated egoistic idea of the nation and its disregard of the larger idea of Europe to which the nation-idea must now be subjected and subordinated. The total life of Europe must now be the all-engrossing unity, its good the paramount consideration, and the egoism of the nation must consent to exist only as an organic part of this larger egoism. In effect, this is the acceptance after so many decades of the idea of Nietzsche who insisted that nationalism and war were anachronisms and the ideal of all enlightened minds must be not to be good patriots but good Europeans. But immediately the question arose, what then of the increasing importance of America in world politics, what of Japan and China, what of the renewed stirrings of life in Asia? The writer had therefore to draw back from his first formula and to explain that by Europe he meant not Europe but all nations that had accepted the principles of European civilisation as the basis of their polity and social organisation. This more philosophical formula has the obvious or at least the specious advantage that it brings in America and Japan and thus recognises all the actually free or dominant nations in the circle of the proposed solidarity and holds out too the hope of admission into the circle to others whenever they can prove, after the forceful manner of Japan or otherwise, that they too have come up to the European standard.

Indeed, though Europe is still strongly separate in its own conception from the rest of the world,—as was shown by the often expressed resentment of the continual

THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

existence of Turkey in Europe and the desire to put an end to this government of Europeans by Asiatics,—yet as a matter of fact it is inextricably tangled up with America and Asia. Some of the European nations have colonies in America, all have possessions and ambitions in Asia, where Japan alone is outside the shadow cast by Europe, or in Northern Africa which is culturally one with Asia. The United States of Europe would therefore mean a federation of free European nations dominant over a half-subject Asia and possessor of parts of America and there standing in uneasy proximity to nations still free and necessarily troubled, alarmed and overshadowed by this giant immiscence. The inevitable result would be in America to bring together more closely the Latin Centre and South and the English-speaking North and to emphasise immensely the Munro Doctrine with consequences which cannot easily be foreseen, while in Asia there could be only one of two final endings to the situation, either the disappearance of the remaining free Asiatic States or a vast Asiatic resurgence and the recoil of Europe from Asia. Such movements would be a prolongation of the old line of human development and set at nought the new cosmopolitan conditions created by modern culture and Science; but they are inevitable if the nation-idea in the West is to merge into the Europe-idea, that is to say, into the continental idea rather than into the wider consciousness of a common humanity.

If, therefore, any new supra-national order is to evolve sooner or later as a result of the present upheaval, it must be an association that will embrace Asia, Africa and America as well as Europe and it must be in its nature an organisation of international life constituted by a

number of free nations such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the United States, the Latin republics and a number of imperial and colonising nations such as are most of the peoples of Europe. Either the latter would remain, as they now are, free in themselves but masters of subject peoples who, with the advance of time, would become more and more intolerant of the yoke imposed on them or else they would be, by an ethical advance which is as yet very far from accomplished, partly centres of free federal empires, partly nations holding in trust races yet backward and undeveloped until they arrived at the capacity of self-administration, as the United States have claimed to hold for a time the Philippines. In the former case, the unity, the order, the common law established would perpetuate and be partly founded on an enormous system of injustice and exposed to the revolts and revolutions of Nature and the great revenges by which she finally vindicates the human spirit against wrongs which she tolerates for a time as necessary incidents of human development. In the latter, there would be some chance that the new order, however far in its beginnings from the ultimate ideal of a free association of free human aggregates, might lead peacefully and by a natural unfolding of the spiritual and ethical progress of the race to such a secure, just and healthy political, social and economic foundation as might enable mankind to turn from its preoccupation with these lower cares and begin at last that development of its higher self which is the nobler part of its potential destiny, or if not that,—for who knows whether Nature's long experiment in the human type is foredoomed to success or failure,—at least the loftiest possibility of our future which the human mind can envisage.

CHAPTER XI

THE SMALL FREE UNIT AND THE LARGER CONCENTRATED UNITY.

IF we consider the possibilities of a unification of the human race on political, administrative and economic lines, we see that a certain sort of unity or first step towards it appears not only to be possible, but to be more or less urgently demanded by an underlying spirit and sense of need in the race. This spirit has been created largely by increased mutual knowledge and close communication, partly by the development of wider and freer intellectual ideals and emotional sympathies in the progressive mind of the race. The sense of need is partly due to the demand for the satisfaction of these ideals and sympathies, partly to economic and other material changes which render the results of divided national life, war, commercial rivalry and consequent insecurity and peril to the complex and easily vulnerable modern social organisation more and more irksome both for the economic and political human animal and for the idealistic thinker. Partly also the new turn is due to the desire of the successful nations to possess, enjoy and exploit the rest of the world at ease without the peril incurred by their own formidable rivalries and competitions and rather by some convenient understanding and compromise among themselves. The real strength of this tendency is in its intellectual, idealistic

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

and emotional parts. Its economic causes are partly permanent and therefore elements of strength and secure fulfilment, partly artificial and temporary and therefore elements of insecurity and weakness. The political incentives are the baser part in the amalgam; their presence may even vitiate the whole result and lead in the end to a necessary dissolution and reversal of whatever unity may be initially accomplished.

Still, a result of some kind is possible in the comparatively near or more distant future. We can see on what lines it is likely to work itself out, if at all,—at first by a sort of understanding and initial union for the most pressing common needs, arrangements of commerce, arrangements of peace and war, arrangements for the common arbitration of disputes, arrangements for the policing of the world. These crude initial arrangements, once accepted, will naturally develop by the pressure of the governing idea and the inherent need into a closer unity and even perhaps in the long end into a common supreme government which may endure till the defects of the system established and the rise of other ideals and tendencies inconsistent with its maintenance lead either to a new radical change or to its entire dissolution into its natural elements and constituents. We have seen also that such a union is likely to take place upon the basis of the present world somewhat modified by the changes that must now inevitably take place,—international changes that are likely to be adjustments rather than the introduction of a new radical principle and social changes within the nations themselves of a much more far-reaching character. It will take place, that is to say, as between the present free nations and colonising empires, but with an internal arrangement of society and an administrative

mould progressing rapidly towards a rigorous State socialism and equality by which the woman and the worker will chiefly profit. For these are the master tendencies of the hour. Certainly, no one can confidently predict that the hour will victoriously prevail over the whole future. We know not what surprises of the great human drama, what violent resurgence of the old nation-idea, what collisions, failures, unexpected results in the working out of the new social tendencies, what revolt of the human spirit against a burdensome and mechanical State collectivism, what growth and power perhaps of a gospel of philosophic anarchism missioned to reassert man's ineradicable yearning for individual liberty and free self-fulfilment, what unforeseen religious and spiritual revolutions may not intervene in the very course of this present movement of mankind and divert it to quite another denouement. The human mind has not yet reached that illumination or that sure science by which it can forecast securely even its morrow.

Let us suppose, however, that no such unexpected factor intervenes. The political unity of mankind, of a sort, may then be realised. The question still remains whether it is desirable that it should be realised thus and now, and if so, under what circumstances, with what necessary conditions in the absence of which the result gained can only be temporary as were former partial unifications of mankind. And first let us remember at what cost humanity has gained the larger unities it has already achieved in the past. The immediate past has actually created for us the nation, the natural homogeneous empire of nations kin in race and culture or united by geographical necessity and mutual attractions, and the artificial heterogeneous empire secured by

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

conquest, maintained by force, by yoke of law, by commercial and military colonisation, but not yet welded into true psychological unities. Each of these principles of aggregation has given some actual gain or some possibility of progress to mankind at large, but each has brought with it its temporary or inherent disadvantages and inflicted some wound on the complete human ideal.

The creation of a new unity, when it proceeds by external and mechanical processes, has usually and indeed almost by a practical necessity to go through a process of internal contraction before the unit can indulge again in a new and free expansion of its inner life; for its first need and instinct is to form and secure its own existence. To enforce its unity is its predominant impulse and to that paramount need it has to sacrifice the diversity, harmonious complexity, richness of various material, freedom of inner relations without which the true perfection of life is impossible. In order to enforce a strong and sure unity it has to create a paramount centre, a concentrated State power, whether of king or military aristocracy or plutocratic class or other governing contrivance to which the liberty and free life of the individual, the commune, the city, the region or any other lesser unit has to be subordinated and sacrificed. At the same time, there is a tendency to create a firmly mechanised and rigid state of society, sometimes a hierarchy of classes or orders in which the lower is appointed to an inferior place and duty and bound down to a narrower life than the higher, such as the hierarchy of king, clergy, aristocracy, middle class, peasantry, servile class which replaced in Europe the rich and free existence of the city and the tribe or else a rigid

THE SMALL FREE UNIT & LARGER CONCENTRATED UNITY

caste system such as the one that replaced in India the open and natural existence of the vigorous Aryan clans. Moreover, as we have already seen, the active and stimulating participation of all or most in the full vigour of the common life, which was the great advantage of the small but free earlier communities, is much more difficult in a larger aggregate and is at first impossible. In its place, there is the concentration of the force of life into a dominant centre or at most a governing and directing class or classes, while the great mass of the community is left in a relative torpor and enjoys only a minimum and indirect share of that vitality in so far as it is allowed to filter down from above and indirectly affect the grosser, poorer and narrower life below. This at least is the phenomenon we see in the historic period of human development which preceded and led up to the creation of the modern world. In the future also the need of a concentrating and formative rigidity may be felt for the firm formation and consolidation of the new political and social forms that are taking or will take its place.

The small human communities in which all can easily take an active part and in which ideas and movements are swiftly and vividly felt by all and can be worked out rapidly and thrown into form without the need of a large and difficult organisation, turn naturally towards freedom as soon as they cease to be preoccupied with the first absorbing necessity of self-preservation. Such forms as absolute monarchy or a despotic oligarchy, an infallible Papacy or sacrosanct theocratic class cannot flourish at ease in such an environment; they lack that advantage of distance from the mass and that remoteness from exposure to the daily criticism of the individual mind on which their prestige depends and they have not to justify

them the pressing need of uniformity among large multitudes and over vast areas which they elsewhere serve to establish and maintain. Therefore we find in Rome the monarchical regime unable to maintain itself and in Greece looked upon as an unnatural and brief usurpation, while the oligarchical form of government, though more vigorous, could not assure to itself, except in a purely military community like Sparta, either a high and exclusive supremacy or a firm duration. The tendency to a democratic freedom in which every man had a natural part in the civic life as well as in the cultural institutions of the State, an equal voice in the determination of law and policy and as much share in their execution as could be assured to him by his right as a citizen and his capacity as an individual,—this democratic tendency was inborn in the spirit and inherent in the form of the city state. In Rome the tendency was equally present but could not develop so rapidly or fulfil itself so entirely as in Greece because of the necessities of a military and conquering State which needed either an absolute head, an *imperator*, or a small oligarchic body to direct its foreign policy and its military conduct; but even so, the democratic element was always present and the democratic tendency was so strong that it began to work and grow from almost prehistoric times even in the midst of Rome's constant struggle for self-preservation and expansion and was only suspended by such supreme struggles as the great duel with Carthage for the empire of the Mediterranean. In India the early communities were free societies in which the king was only a military head or civic chief; we find the democratic element persisting in the days of Buddha and surviving in small States in the days of Chandragupta and Megasthenes even when great bureaucratically

governed monarchies and empires were finally replacing the free earlier polity. It was only in proportion as the need for a large organisation of Indian life over the whole peninsula or at least the northern part of it made itself increasingly felt that the form of absolute monarchy grew upon the country and the learned and sacerdotal caste imposed its theocratic domination over the communal mind and its rigid Shastra as the binding chain of social unity and the binding link of a national culture.

As in the political and civic, so in the social life. A certain democratic equality is almost inevitable in a small community; the opposite phenomenon of strong class distinctions and superiorities may establish itself during the military period of the clan or tribe but cannot long be maintained in the close intimacy of a settled city state except by artificial means such as were employed by Sparta and Venice. Even when the distinction remains, its exclusiveness is blunted and cannot deepen and intensify itself into the nature of a fixed hierarchy. The natural social type of the small community is such as we see in Athens, where not only Cleon, the tanner, exercised as strong a political influence as the highborn and wealthy Nicias and the highest offices and civic functions were open to men of all classes, but in social functions and connections also there was a free association and equality. We see a similar democratic equality, though of a different type, in the earlier records of Indian civilisation. The rigid hierarchy of castes with the pretensions and arrogance of the caste spirit was a later development; in the simpler life of old, difference or even superiority of function did not carry with it a sense of personal or class superiority: at the beginning, the most sacred, religious and social function, that of the Rishi and sacrificer,

seems to have been open to men of all classes and occupations. Theocracy, caste and absolute kingship grew in force *pari passu* like the Church and the monarchical power in mediaeval Europe under the compulsion of the new circumstances created by the growth of large social and political aggregates.

Societies advancing in culture under these conditions of the early Greek, Roman and Indian city states and clan-nations were bound to develop a general vividness of life and dynamic force of culture and creation which the later national aggregates were obliged to forego and could only recover after a long period of self-formation in which the difficulties attending the development of a new organism had to be met and overcome. The cultural and civic life of the Greek city, of which Athens was the supreme achievement, a life in which living itself was an education, where the poorest as well as the richest sat together in the theatre to see and judge the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides and the Athenian trader and shopkeeper took part in the subtle philosophical conversations of Socrates, created for Europe not only its fundamental political types and ideals but practically all its basic forms of intellectual, philosophical, literary and artistic culture. The equally vivid political, juridical and military life of the single city of Rome created for Europe its types of political activity, military discipline and science, jurisprudence of law and equity and even its ideals of empire and colonisation. And in India it was that early vivacity of spiritual life of which we catch glimpses in the Vedic, Upanishadic and Buddhist literature, which created the religions, philosophies, spiritual disciplines that have since by direct or indirect influence spread something of their spirit and knowledge over

Asia and Europe. And everywhere the root of this free, generalised and widely pulsating vital and dynamic force, which the modern world is only now in some sort recovering, was amid all differences the same; it was the complete participation not of a limited class, but of the individual generally in the many-sided life of the community, the sense each had of being full of the energy of all and of a certain freedom to grow, to be himself, to achieve, to think, to create in the undammed flood of that universal energy. It is this condition, this relation between the individual and the aggregate which modern life has tried to some extent to restore in a cumbrous, clumsy and imperfect fashion but with much vaster forces of life and thought at its disposal than early humanity could command.

It is possible that, if the old city states and clan-nations could have endured and modified themselves so as to create larger free aggregates without losing their own life in the new mass, many problems might have been solved with a greater simplicity, direct vision and truth to Nature which we have now to settle in a very complex and cumbrous fashion and under peril of enormous dangers and wide-spread convulsions. But that was not to be. That early life had vital defects which it could not cure. In the case of the Mediterranean nations, two most important exceptions have to be made to the general participation of all individuals in the full civic and cultural life of the community; for that participation was denied to the slave and hardly granted at all in the narrow life conceded to the woman. In India the institution of slavery was practically absent and the woman had at first a freer and more dignified position than in Greece and Rome; but the slave was soon replaced by the

proletariate, called in India the Shudra, and the increasing tendency to deny the highest benefits of the common life and culture to the Shudra and the woman brought down Indian society to the level of its Western congeners. It is possible that these two great problems of economic serfdom and the subjection of woman might have been attacked and solved in the early community if it had lived longer, as it has now been attacked and is in process of solution in the modern State. But it is doubtful; only in Rome do we glimpse certain initial tendencies which might have turned in that direction and they never went farther than faint hints of a future possibility.

More vital was the entire failure of this early form of human society to solve the question of the interrelations between community and community. War remained their normal relation. All attempts at free federation failed, and military conquest was left as the sole means of unification. The attachment to the small aggregate in which each man felt himself to be most alive had generated a sort of mental and vital insularity which could not accommodate itself to the new and wider ideas which philosophy and political thought, moved by the urge of larger needs and tendencies, brought into the field of life. Therefore the old States had to dissolve and disappear, in India into the huge bureaucratic empires of the Gupta and the Maurya to which the Pathan, the Moghul and the Englishman succeeded, in the West into the vast military and commercial expansions achieved by Alexander, by the Carthaginian oligarchy and by the Roman republic and empire. The latter were not national but supranational unities, premature attempts at too large unifications of mankind that could not really be

accomplished with any finality until the intermediate nation-unit had been fully and healthily developed.

The creation of the national aggregate was therefore reserved for the millennium that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire; and in order to solve this problem left to it, the world during that period had to recoil from many and indeed most of the gains which had been achieved for mankind by the city states. Only after this problem was solved could there be any real effort to develop not only a firmly organised but a progressive and increasingly perfected community, not only a strong mould of social life but the free growth and completeness of life itself within that mould. This cycle we must briefly study before we can consider whether the intervention of a new effort at a larger aggregation is likely to be free from the danger of a new recoil in which the inner progress of the race will have, at least temporarily, to be sacrificed in order to concentrate effort on the development and affirmation of a massive external unity.

foundations in the central nation-unity, as did Rome in Italy. In Greece Philip, the first unifier, made a rapid but imperfect sketch of unification, the celerity of which had been made possible by the previous and yet looser Spartan domination; and had he been followed by successors of a patient talent rather than by a man of vast imagination and supreme genius, this first, rough, practical outline might have been filled in, strengthened and an enduring work achieved. One who first founds on a large scale and rapidly, needs always as his successor a man with the talent or the genius for organisation rather than an impetus for expansion. A Caesar followed by an Augustus meant a work of massive durability; a Philip followed by an Alexander, an achievement of great importance to the world by its results, but in itself a mere splendour of short-lived brilliance. Rome, to whom careful Nature denied any man of commanding genius until she had firmly unified Italy and laid the basis of her empire, was able to build much more firmly; nevertheless, she founded that empire not as the centre and head of a great nation, but still as a dominant city using a subject Italy for the springing-board to leap upon and subjugate the surrounding world. Therefore she had to face a much more difficult problem of assimilation, that of nation-nebulæ and formed or inchoate cultures different from her own, before she had achieved and learned to apply to the new problem the art of complete and absolute unification on a smaller and easier scale, before she had welded into one living national organism, no longer Roman but Italian, the elements of difference and community offered by the Gallic, Latin, Umbrian, Oscan and Graeco-Apulian factors in ancient Italy. Therefore, although her empire endured for several centuries, it achieved

temporary conservation at the cost of energy, of vitality and inner vigour; it accomplished neither the nation-unit nor the durable empire-unity, and like other ancient empires it had to collapse and make room for a new era of true nation-building.

It is necessary to emphasise where the error lay. The administrative, political, economic organisation of mankind in aggregates of smaller or greater size is a work which belongs at its basis to the same order of phenomena as the creation of vital organisms in physical Nature. It uses, that is to say, primarily external and physical methods governed by the principles of physical life-energy intent on the creation of living forms, although its inner object is to deliver, to manifest and to bring into secure working a supraphysical, a psychological principle latent behind the operations of the life and the body. To build a strong and durable body and vital functioning for a distinct, powerful, well-centred and well-diffused corporate ego is its whole aim and method. In this process, as we have seen, first smaller distinct units in a larger loose unity are formed; these have a strong psychological existence and a well-developed body and vital functioning, but in the larger mass the psychological sense and the vital energy are present but unorganised and without power of definite functioning, and the body is a fluid quantity or a half-nebulous or at most a half-fluid, half-solidified mass, a plasm rather than a body. This has in its turn to be formed and organised; a firm physical shape has to be made for it, a well-defined vital functioning and a clear psychological reality, self-consciousness and mental will-to-be.

Thus a new large unity is formed; and this again finds itself among a number of similar unities which it looks

on first as hostile and quite different from itself, then enters into a sort of community in difference with them, till again we find repeated the original phenomenon of a number of smaller distinct units in a wider loose unity. The contained units are larger and more complex than before, the containing unity is also larger and more complex than before, but the essential position is the same and a similar problem presents itself for solution. Thus in the beginning there was the phenomenon of city states and regional peoples coexisting as disunited parts of a loose geographical and cultural unity, Italy or Hellas, and there was the problem of creating the Hellenic or Italian nation. Afterwards there came instead the phenomenon of nation-units formed or in formation coexisting as disunited parts of the loose geographical and cultural unity first, of Christendom, then, of Europe and with it the problem of the union of this Christendom or of this Europe which, though more than once conceived by individual statesmen or political thinkers, was never achieved nor even the first steps attempted. Before its difficulties could be solved, the modern movement with its unifying forces has presented to us the new and more complex phenomenon of a number of nation-units and empire-units embedded in the loose, but growing life-interdependence and commercial close-connection of mankind, and the attendant problem of the unification of mankind already overshadows the unfulfilled dream of the unification of Europe.

In physical Nature vital organisms cannot live entirely on themselves; they live either by interchange with other vital organisms or partly by that interchange and partly by devouring others; for these are the processes of assimilation common to separated physical life. In unification of

life, on the other hand, an assimilation is possible which goes beyond this alternative of either the devouring of one by another or a continued separate distinctness which limits assimilation to a mutual reception of the energies discharged by one life upon another. There can be instead an association of units consciously subordinating themselves to a general unity which is developed in the process of their coming together. Some of these, indeed, are killed and used as material for new elements, but all cannot be so treated, all cannot be devoured by one dominant unit; for in that case there is no unification, no creation of a larger unity, no continued greater life, but only a temporary survival of the devourer by the digestion and utilisation of the energy of the devoured. In the unification of human aggregates, this then is the problem, how the component units shall be subordinated to a new unity without their death and disappearance.

The weakness of the old empire-unities created by conquest was that they tended to destroy the smaller units they assimilated, as did imperial Rome, and to turn them into food for the life of the dominant organ. Gaul, Spain, Africa, Egypt were thus killed, turned into dead matter and their energy drawn into the centre, Rome; thus the empire became a great dying mass on which the life of Rome fed for several centuries. In such a method, however, the exhaustion of the life in the subject parts must end by leaving the dominant voracious centre without any source for new storage of energy. At first the best intellectual force of the conquered provinces flowed to Rome and their vital energy poured into it a great supply of military force and governing ability, but eventually both failed and first the intellectual energy of Rome and then its military and political ability died

away in the midst of the general death. Nor would Roman civilisation have lived even for so long but for the new ideas and motives it received from the East. This interchange, however, had neither the vividness nor the constant flow which marks the incoming and the return of ever new tides of thought and motives of life in the modern world and it could not really revivify the low vitality of the imperial body nor even arrest very long the process of its decay. When the Roman grasp loosened, the world which it had held so firmly constricted had been for long a huge, decorous, magnificently organised death-in-life incapable of new organisation or self-regeneration; vitality could only be restored through the inrush of the vigorous barbarian world from the plains of Germany, the steppes beyond the Danube and the deserts of Arabia. Dissolution had to precede a movement of sounder construction.

In the mediaeval period of nation-building, we see Nature mending this earlier error. When we speak indeed of the errors of Nature, we use a figure illegitimately borrowed from our human psychology and experience; for in Nature there are no errors but only the deliberate measure of her paces traced and re-traced in a prefigured rhythm, of which each step has a meaning and its place in the action and reaction of her gradual advance. The crushing domination of Roman uniformity was a device, not to kill out permanently, but to discourage in their excessive separative vitality the old smaller units, so that when they revived again they might not present an insuperable obstacle to the growth of a true national unity. What the mere nation-unity may lose by not passing through this cruel discipline,—we leave aside the danger it brings of an actual death like the Assyrian

or Chaldean as well as the spiritual and other gains that may accrue by avoiding it,—is shown in the example of India where the Maurya, Gupta, Andhra, Moghul empires, huge and powerful and well-organised as they were, never succeeded in passing a steam-roller over the too strongly independent life of the subordinate unities from the village community to the regional or linguistic area. It has needed the pressure of a rule neither indigenous in origin nor locally centered, the dominance of a foreign nation entirely alien in culture and morally armoured against the sympathies and attractions of India's cultural atmosphere to do in a century this work which two thousand years of a looser imperialism had failed to accomplish. Such a process implies necessarily a cruel and often dangerous pressure and breaking up of old institutions; for Nature tired of the obstinate immobility of an age-long resistance seems to care little how many beautiful and valuable things are destroyed so long as her main end is accomplished; but we may be sure that if destruction is done, it is because for that end the destruction was indispensable.

In Europe, after the Roman pressure was removed, the city state and regional nation revived as elements of a new construction; but except in one country and curiously enough in Italy itself the city state offered no real resistance to the process of national unification. We may ascribe its strong resuscitation in Italy to two circumstances, first, to the premature Roman oppression of the ancient free city life of Italy before it had realised its full potentialities and secondly, to its survival in seed both by the prolonged civil life of Rome itself and by the persistence in the Italian *municipia* of a sense of separate life, oppressed but never quite ground out of

existence as was the separate clan-life of Gaul and Spain or the separate city life of Greece. Thus psychologically the Italian city state neither died satisfied and fulfilled nor was broken up beyond recall; it revived in new incarnations. And this revival was disastrous to the nation-life of Italy, though an incalculable boon and advantage to the culture and civilisation of the world; for as the city life of Greece had originally created, so the city life of Italy recovered, renewed and gave in a new form to our modern times the art, literature, thought and science of the Graeco-Roman world. Elsewhere, the city-unit revived only in the shape of the free or half-free municipalities of mediaeval France, Flanders and Germany; and these were at no time an obstacle to unification, but rather helped to form a subconscious basis for it and in the meanwhile to prevent by rich impulses and free movement of thought and art the mediaeval tendency to intellectual uniformity, stagnation and obscurity.

The old clan-nation perished, except in countries like Ireland and Northern and Western Scotland which had not undergone the Roman pressure, and there it was as fatal to unification as the city state in Italy; it prevented Ireland from evolving an organised unity and the Highland Celts from amalgamating with the Anglo-Celtic Scotch nation until the yoke of England passed over them and did what the Roman rule would have done if it had not been stayed in its expansion by the Grampians and the Irish seas. In the rest of Western Europe, the work done by the Roman rule was so sound that even the domination of the Western countries by the tribal nations of Germany failed to revive the old, strongly marked and obstinately separative clan-nation. It

created in its stead the regional kingdoms of Germany and the feudal and provincial divisions of France and Spain; but it was only in Germany, which like Ireland and the Scotch highlands had not endured the Roman yoke, that this regional life proved a serious obstacle to unification. In France it seemed for a time to prevent it, but in reality it resisted only long enough to make itself of value as an element of richness and variation in the final French unity. The unexampled perfection of that unity is a sign of the secret wisdom concealed in the prolonged process we watch through the history of France which seems to a superficial glance so miserable and distracted, so long an alternation of anarchy with feudal or monarchic despotism, so different from the gradual, steady and much more orderly development of the national life of England. But in England the necessary variation and richness of the ultimate organism was otherwise provided for by the great difference of the races that formed the new nation and by the persistence of Wales, Ireland and Scotland as separate cultural units with a subordinate self-consciousness of their own in the larger unity.

The European cycle of nation-building differs therefore from the ancient cycle which led from the regional and city state to the empire, first, in its not overshooting itself by proceeding towards a larger unification to the neglect of the necessary intermediate aggregate, secondly, in its slow and ripening progression through three successive stages by which unity was secured and yet the constituent elements not killed nor prematurely nor unduly oppressed by the instruments of unification. The first stage progressed through a long balancing of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in which the feudal

system provided a principle of order and of a loose but still organic unity. The second was a movement of unification and increasing uniformity in which certain features of the ancient imperial system of Rome were repeated, but with a less crushing force and exhausting tendency. It was marked first by the creation of a metropolitan centre which began to draw to it, like Rome, the best life-energies of all the other parts. A second feature was the growth of an absolute sovereign authority whose function was to impose a legal, administrative, political and linguistic uniformity and centralisation on the national life. A third sign of this movement was the establishment of a governing spiritual head and body which served to impose a similar uniformity of religious thought and intellectual education and opinion. This unifying pressure too far pursued might have ended disastrously like the Roman but for a third stage of revolt and diffusion which broke or subordinated these instruments, feudalism, monarchy, Church authority as soon as their work had been done and substituted a new movement directed towards the diffusion of the national life through a strong and well-organised political, legal, social and cultural freedom and equality. Its trend has been to endeavour that as in the ancient city, so in the modern nation, all classes and all individuals should enjoy the benefits and participate in the free energy of the released national existence.

The third stage of national life enjoys the advantages of unity and sufficient uniformity created by the second and is able to safely utilise anew the possibilities of regional and city life saved from entire destruction by the first. By these gradations of national progress, it has been made increasingly possible for our modern times to

envisage, if and where it is willed or needed, the idea of a federated nation or federal empire based securely upon a fundamental and well-realised psychological unity: this indeed was already achieved in a simple type in Germany and in America. Also we can move now safely, if we will, towards a partial decentralisation through subordinate governments, communes, and provincial cities which may help to cure the malady of an excessive metropolitan absorption of the best national energies and facilitate their free circulation through many centres and plexuses. At the same time, we contemplate the organised use of a State intelligently representative of the whole conscious, active, vitalised nation as a means for the perfection of the life of the individual and the community. This is the point which the development of the nation-aggregate has reached at the moment when we are again confronted either, according to future trends, with the wider problem of the imperial aggregate or the still vaster problems created by the growing cultural unity and commercial and political interdependence of all mankind.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORMATION OF THE NATION-UNIT— THE THREE STAGES

THE three stages of development which have marked the mediaeval and modern evolution of the nation-type may be regarded as the natural process where a new form of unity has to be created out of complex conditions and heterogeneous materials by an external rather than an internal process. The external method tries always to mould the psychological condition of men into changed forms and habits under the pressure of circumstances and institutions rather than by the direct creation of a new psychological condition which would, on the contrary, develop freely and flexibly its own appropriate and serviceable social forms. In such a process there must be in the nature of things first, some kind of looser yet sufficiently compelling order of society and common type of civilisation to serve as a framework or scaffolding within which the new edifice shall arise. Next, there must come naturally a period of stringent organisation directed towards unity and centrality of control and perhaps a general levelling and uniformity under that central direction. Last, if the new organism is not to fossilise and stereotype life, if it is to be still a living and vigorous creation of Nature, there must come a period of free internal development as soon as the formation is assured and unity has become a mental and vital habit. This

freer internal activity assured in its heart and at its basis by the formed needs, ideas, and instincts of the community will no longer bring with it the peril of disorder, disruption or arrest of the secure growth and formation of the organism.

The form and principle of the first looser system must depend upon the past history and present conditions of the elements that have to be welded into the new unity. But it is noticeable that both in Europe and Asia there was a common tendency, which we cannot trace to any close interchange of ideas and must therefore attribute to the operation of the same natural cause and necessity, towards the evolution of a social hierarchy based on a division according to four different social activities,—spiritual function, political domination and the double economic function of mercantile production and interchange and dependent labour or service. The spirit, form and equipoise worked out were very different in different parts of the world according to the bent of the community and its circumstances, but the initial principle was almost identical. The motive-force everywhere was the necessity of a large effective form of common social life marked by fixity of status through which individual and small communal interests might be brought under the yoke of a sufficient religious, political and economic unity and likeness. It is notable that Islamic civilisation, with its dominant principle of equality and brotherhood in the faith and its curious institution of a slavery which did not prevent the slave from rising even to the throne, was never able to evolve such a form of society and failed, in spite of its close contact with political and progressive Europe, to develop strong and living, well-organised and conscious nation-units even after the disruption of the

empire of the Caliphs; it is only now under the pressure of modern ideas and conditions that this is being done.

But even where this preparatory stage was effectively brought into existence, the subsequent stages did not necessarily follow. The feudal period of Europe with its four orders of the clergy, the king and the nobles, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has a sufficiently close resemblance to the Indian fourfold order of the sacerdotal, military and mercantile classes and the Shudras. The Indian system took its characteristic stamp from a different order of ideas more prominently religious and ethical than political, social or economic; but still, practically, the dominant function of the system was social and economic and there seems at first sight to be no reason why it should not have followed, with whatever differences of detail, the common evolution. Japan with its great feudal order under the spiritual and secular headship of the Mikado and afterwards the double headship of the Mikado and the Shogun evolved one of the most vigorous and self-conscious nation-units the world has seen. China with its great learned class uniting in one the Brahmin and Kshatriya functions of spiritual and secular knowledge and executive rule and its Emperor and Son of Heaven for head and type of the national unity succeeded in becoming a united nation. The different result in India, apart from other causes, was due to the different evolution of the social order. Elsewhere that evolution turned in the direction of a secular organisation and headship; it created within the nation itself a clear political self-consciousness and as a consequence either the subordination of the sacerdotal class to the military and administrative or else their equality or even their fusion under a common spiritual

and secular head. In mediaeval India, on the contrary, it turned towards the social dominance of the sacerdotal class and the substitution of a common spiritual for a common political consciousness as the basis of the national feeling. No lasting secular centre was evolved, no great imperial or kingly head which by its prestige, power, antiquity and claim to general reverence and obedience could overbalance or even merely balance this sacerdotal prestige and predominance and create a sense of political as well as spiritual and cultural oneness.

The struggle between the Church and the monarchical State is one of the most important and vital features of the history of Europe. Had that conflict ended in an opposite result, the whole future of humanity would have been in jeopardy. As it was, the Church was obliged to renounce its claim to independence and dominance over the temporal power. Even in the nations which remained Catholic, a real independence and dominance of the temporal authority was successfully vindicated; for the King of France exercised a control over the Gallican Church and clergy which rendered all effective interference of the Pope in French affairs impossible. In Spain, in spite of the close alliance between Pope and King and the theoretical admission of the former's complete spiritual authority, it was really the temporal head who decided the ecclesiastical policy and commanded the terrors of the Inquisition. In Italy, the immediate presence of the spiritual head of Catholicism in Rome was a great moral obstacle to the development of a politically united nation; the passionate determination of the liberated Italian people to establish its King in Rome was really a symbol of the law that a self-conscious and politically organised nation can have only one

supreme and central authority admitted in its midst and that must be the secular power. The nation which has reached or is reaching this stage must either separate the religious and spiritual claim from its common secular and political life by individualising religion or else it must unite the two by the alliance of the State and the Church to uphold the single authority of the temporal head or combine the spiritual and temporal headship in one authority as was done in Japan and China and in England of the Reformation. Even in India the people which first developed some national self-consciousness not of a predominantly spiritual character, were the Rajputs, especially of Mewar, to whom the Rajah was in every way the head of society and of the nation; and the people which having achieved national self-consciousness came nearest to achieving also organised political unity were the Sikhs for whom Guru Govind Singh deliberately devised a common secular and spiritual centre in the Khalsa, and the Mahrattas who not only established a secular head, representative of the conscious nation, but so secularised themselves that, as it were, the whole people indiscriminately, Brahmin and Shudra, became for a time potentially a people of soldiers, politicians and administrators.

In other words, the institution of a fixed social hierarchy, while it seems to have been a necessary stage for the first tendencies of national formation, needed to modify itself and prepare its own dissolution if the later stages were to be rendered possible. An instrument good for a certain work and set of conditions, if it is still retained when other work has to be done and conditions change, becomes necessarily an obstacle. The direction needed was a change from the spiritual authority of one class

and the political authority of another to a centralisation of the common life of the evolving nation under a secular rather than a religious head or, if the religious tendency in the people be too strong to separate things spiritual and temporal, under a national head who shall be the fountain of authority in both departments. Especially was it necessary for the creation of a political self-consciousness, without which no separate nation-unit can be successfully formed, that the sentiments, activities, instruments proper to its creation should for a time take the lead and all others stand behind and support them. A Church or a dominant sacerdotal caste remaining within its own function cannot form the organised political unity of a nation; for it is governed by other than political and administrative considerations and cannot be expected to subordinate to them its own characteristic feelings and interests. It can only be otherwise if the religious caste or sacerdotal class become also as in Tibet the actually ruling political class of the country. In India, the dominance of a caste governed by sacerdotal, religious and partly by spiritual interests and considerations, a caste which dominated thought and society and determined the principles of the national life but did not actually rule and administer, has always stood in the way of the development followed by the more secular-minded European and Mongolian peoples. It is only now after the advent of European civilisation when the Brahmin caste has not only lost the best part of its exclusive hold on the national life but has largely secularised itself, that political and secular considerations have come into the forefront, a pervading political self-consciousness has been awakened and the organised unity of the nation, as distinct from a spiritual and cultural oneness, made

possible in fact and not only as an unshaped subconscious tendency.

The second stage of the development of the nation-unit has been, then, the modification of the social structure so as to make room for a powerful and visible centre of political and administrative unity. This stage is necessarily attended by a strong tendency to the abrogation of even such liberties as a fixed social hierarchy provides and the concentration of power in the hands, usually, of a dominant if not always an absolute monarchical government. By modern democratic ideas kingship is only tolerated either as an inoperative figure-head or a servant of the State life or a convenient centre of the executive administration, it is no longer indispensable as a real control; but the historical importance of a powerful kingship in the evolution of the nation-type, as it actually developed in the mediaeval times, cannot be exaggerated. Even in liberty-loving, insular and individualistic England, the Plantagenets and Tudors were the real and active nucleus round which the nation grew into firm form and into adult strength; and in Continental countries the part played by the Capets and their successors in France, by the House of Castile in Spain and by the Romanoffs and their predecessors in Russia is still more prominent. In the last of these instances, one might almost say that without the Ivans, Peters and Catherines there would have been no Russia. And even in modern times, the almost mediaeval role played by the Hohenzollerns in the unification and growth of Germany was watched with an uneasy astonishment by the democratic peoples to whom such a phenomenon was no longer intelligible and seemed hardly to be serious. But we may note also the same phenomenon in the first period

of formation of the new nations of the Balkans. The seeking for a king to centralise and assist their growth, despite all the strange comedies and tragedies which have accompanied it, becomes perfectly intelligible as a manifestation of the sense of the old necessity, not so truly necessary now¹ but felt in the subconscious minds of these peoples. In the new formation of Japan into a nation of the modern type the Mikado played a similar role; the instinct of the renovators brought him out of his helpless seclusion to meet this inner need. The attempt of a brief dictatorship in revolutionary China to convert itself into a new national monarchy may be attributed quite as much to the same feeling in a practical mind as to mere personal ambition.² It is a sense of this great role played by the kingship in centralising and shaping national life at the most critical stage of its growth which explains the tendency common in the East and not altogether absent from the history of the West to invest it with an almost sacred character; it explains also the passionate loyalty with which great national dynasties or their successors have been served even in the moment of their degeneration and downfall.

But this movement of national development, however salutary in its peculiar role, is almost fatally attended with

¹ Now replaced by the spiritual-political headship of an almost semi-divine Leader in a Führer who incarnates in himself, as it were, the personality of the race.

² It should be noted that even the democratic idealism of the modern mind in China has been obliged to crystallise itself round the "leader", a Sun Yat Sen or Chiang Kai Shek and the force of inspiration has depended on the power of this living centre.

that suppression of the internal liberties of the people which makes the modern mind so naturally, though unscientifically, harsh in its judgment of the old monarchical absolutism and its tendencies. For always this is a movement of concentration, stringency, uniformity, strong control and one-pointed direction; to universalise one law, one rule, one central authority is the need it has to meet, and therefore its spirit must be to enforce and centralise authority, to narrow or quite suppress liberty and free variation. In England, the period of the New Monarchy from Edward IV to Elizabeth, in France the great Bourbon period from Henry IV to Louis XIV, in Spain the epoch which extends from Ferdinand to Philip II, in Russia the rule of Peter the Great and Catherine were the time in which these nations reached their maturity, formed fully and confirmed their spirit and attained to a robust organisation. And all these were periods of absolutism or of movement to absolutism and a certain foundation of uniformity or attempt to found it. This absolutism clothed already in its more primitive garb the reviving idea of the State and its right to impose its will on the life and thought and conscience of the people so as to make it one, single, undivided, perfectly efficient and perfectly directed mind and body.¹

It is from this point of view that we shall most intelligently understand the attempt of the Tudors and the Stuarts to impose both monarchical authority and religious uniformity on the people and seize the real sense of the religious wars in France, the Catholic monarchical rule in Spain with its atrocious method of the Inquisition

¹ Now illustrated with an interesting completeness in Russia, Germany and Italy—the totalitarian idea.

and the oppressive will of the absolute Czars in Russia to impose also an absolute national Church. The effort failed in England, because, after Elizabeth, it no longer answered to any genuine need; for the nation was already well-formed, strong and secure against disruption from without. Elsewhere it succeeded both in Protestant and Catholic countries, or in the rare cases as in Poland where the movement could not take place or failed, the result was disastrous. Certainly, it was everywhere an outrage on the human soul, but it was not merely due to any natural wickedness of the rulers; it was an inevitable stage in the formation of the nation-unit by political and mechanical means. If it left England the sole country in Europe where liberty could progress by natural gradations, that was due, no doubt, largely to the strong qualities of the people but still more to its fortunate history and insular circumstances.

The monarchical State in this evolution crushed or subordinated the religious liberties of men and made a subservient or conciliated ecclesiastical order the priest of its divine right, Religion the handmaid of a secular throne. It destroyed the liberties of the aristocracy and left it its privileges and those even were allowed only that it might support and buttress the power of the king. After using the bourgeoisie against the nobles, it destroyed, where it could, its real and living civic liberties and permitted only some outward form and its parts of special right and privilege. As for the people they had no liberties to be destroyed. Thus the monarchical State concentrated in its own activities the whole national life. The Church served it with its moral influence, the nobles with their military traditions and ability, the bourgeoisie with the talent or chicane of its lawyers and the literary genius or

administrative power of its scholars, thinkers and men of inborn business capacity; the people gave taxes and served with their blood the personal and national ambitions of the monarchy. But all this powerful structure and closely-knit order of things was doomed by its very triumph and predestined to come down either with a crash or by a more or less unwilling gradual abdication before new necessities and agencies. It was tolerated and supported so long as the nation felt consciously or subconsciously its need and justification; once that was fulfilled and ceased, there came inevitably the old questioning which, now grown fully self-conscious, could no longer be suppressed or permanently resisted. By changing the old order into a mere simulacrum the monarchy had destroyed its own base. The sacerdotal authority of the Church, once questioned on spiritual grounds, could not be long maintained by temporal means, by the sword and the law; the aristocracy keeping its privileges but losing its real functions became odious and questionable to the classes below it; the bourgeoisie conscious of its talent, irritated by its social and political inferiority, awakened by the voice of its thinkers, led the movement of revolt and appealed to the help of the populace; the masses—dumb, oppressed, suffering—rose with this new support which had been denied to them before and overturned the whole social hierarchy. Hence the collapse of the old world and the birth of a new age.

We have already seen the inner justification of this great revolutionary movement. The nation-unit is not formed and does not exist merely for the sake of existing; its purpose is to provide a larger mould of human aggregation in which the race, and not only classes and individuals, may move towards its full human development. So long

as the labour of formation continues, this larger development may be held back and authority and order be accepted as the first consideration, but not when the aggregate is sure of its existence and feels the need of an inner expansion. Then the old bonds have to be burst; the means of formation have to be discarded as obstacles to growth. Liberty then becomes the watchword of the race. The ecclesiastical order which suppressed liberty of thought and new ethical and social development, has to be dispossessed of its despotic authority, so that man may be mentally and spiritually free. The monopolies and privileges of the king and aristocracy have to be destroyed, so that all may take their share of the national power, prosperity and activity. Finally, bourgeois capitalism has to be induced or forced to consent to an economic order in which suffering, poverty and exploitation shall be eliminated and the wealth of the community be more equally shared by all who help to create it. In all directions, men have to come into their own, realise the dignity and freedom of the manhood within them and give play to their utmost capacity.

For liberty is insufficient, justice also is necessary and becomes a pressing demand; the cry for equality arises. Certainly, absolute equality is non-existent in this world; but the word was aimed against the unjust and unnecessary inequalities of the old social order. Under a just social order, there must be an equal opportunity, an equal training for all to develop their faculties and to use them, and, so far as may be, an equal share in the advantages of the aggregate life as the right of all who contribute to the existence, vigour and development of that life by the use of their capacities. As we have noted, this need might have taken the form of an ideal of free

co-operation guided and helped by a wise and liberal central authority expressing the common will, but it has actually reverted to the old notion of an absolute and efficient State—no longer monarchical, ecclesiastical, aristocratic but secular, democratic and socialistic—with liberty sacrificed to the need of equality and aggregate efficiency. The psychological causes of this reversion we shall not now consider. Perhaps liberty and equality, liberty and authority, liberty and organised efficiency can never be quite satisfactorily reconciled so long as man individual and aggregate lives by egoism, so long as he cannot undergo a great spiritual and psychological change and rise beyond mere communal association to that third ideal which some vague inner sense made the revolutionary thinkers of France add to their watchwords of liberty and equality,—the greatest of all the three, though till now only an empty word on man's lips, the ideal of fraternity or, less sentimentally and more truly expressed, an inner oneness. That no mechanism social, political, religious has ever created or can create; it must take birth in the soul and rise from hidden and divine depths within.

CHAPTER XIV

THE POSSIBILITY OF A FIRST STEP TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL UNITY— ITS ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES

THE study of the growth of the nation-unit under the pressure indeed of a growing inner need and idea but by the agency of political, economic and social forces, forms and instruments shows us a progress that began from a loose formation in which various elements were gathered together for unification, proceeded through a period of strong concentration and coercion in which the conscious national ego was developed, fortified and provided with a centre and instruments of its organic life and passed on to a final period of assured separate existence and internal unity as against outside pressure in which liberty and an active and more and more equal share of all in the benefits of the national life became possible. If the unity of the human race is to be brought about by the same means and agents and in a similar fashion to that of the nation, we should expect it to follow a similar course. That is at least the most visible probability and it seems to be consistent with the natural law of all creation which starts from the loose mass, the more or less amorphous vague of forces and materials and proceeds by contraction, constriction, solidification into a firm mould in which the rich evolution of various forms of life is at last securely possible.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

If we consider the actual state of the world and its immediate possibilities, we shall see that a first period of loose formation and imperfect order is inevitable. Neither the intellectual preparation of the human race nor the development of its sentiments nor the economic and political forces and conditions by which it is moved and preoccupied have reached to such a point of inner stress or external pressure as would warrant us in expecting a total change of the basis of our life or the establishment of a complete or a real unity. There cannot as yet be even a real external unity, far less a psychological oneness. It is true that the vague sense and need of something of the kind has been growing rapidly and the object lesson of the war brought the master idea of the future out of the nascent condition in which it was no more than the generous chimera of a few pacifists or internationalist idealists. It came to be recognised that it contains in itself some force of eventual reality, and the voice of those who would cry it down as the pet notion of intellectual cranks and faddists had no longer the same volume and confidence, because it was no longer so solidly supported by the common sense of the average man, that short-sighted common sense of the material mind which consists in a strong feeling for immediate actualities and an entire blindness to the possibilities of the future. But there has as yet been no long intellectual preparation of a more and more dominant thought cast out by the intellectuals of the age to remould the ideas of common men, nor has there been any such gathering to a head of the growing revolt against present conditions as would make it possible for vast masses of men seized by the passion for an ideal and by the hope of a new happiness for mankind to break up the present basis of things and construct a

new scheme of collective life. In another direction, the replacing of the individualistic basis of society by an increasing collectivism, there has been to a large extent such an intellectual preparation and gathering force of revolt; there the war has acted as a precipitative force and brought us much nearer to the possibility of a realised—not necessarily a democratic—State socialism. But there have been no such favourable preconditions for a strong movement of international unification. No great effective outburst of a massed and dynamic idealism in this direction can be reasonably predicted. The preparation may have begun, it may have been greatly facilitated and hastened by recent events, but it is still only in its first stages.

Under such conditions the ideas and schemes of the world's intellectuals who would replan the whole status of international life altogether and from its roots in the light of general principles, are not likely to find any immediate realisation. In the absence of a general idealistic outburst of creative human hope which would make such changes possible, the future will be shaped not by the ideas of the thinker but by the practical mind of the politician which represents the average reason and temperament of the time and effects usually something much nearer the minimum than the maximum of what is possible. The average general mind of a great mass of men, while it is ready to listen to such ideas as it has been prepared to receive and is accustomed to seize on this or that notion with a partisan avidity, is yet ruled in its action not so much by its thought as by its interests, passions and prejudices. The politician and the statesman—and the world is now full of politicians but very empty of statesmen—act in accordance with this average general

mind of the mass; the one is governed by it, the other has always to take it into chief account and cannot lead it where he will, unless he is one of those great geniuses and powerful personalities who unite a large mind and dynamic force of conception with an enormous power or influence over men. Moreover, the political mind has limitations of its own beyond those of the general average mind of the mass; it is even more respectful of the *status quo*, more disinclined to great adventure in which the safe footing of the past has to be abandoned, more incapable of launching out into the uncertain and the new. To do that it must either be forced by general opinion or a powerful interest or else itself fall under the spell of a great new enthusiasm diffused in the mental atmosphere of the times.

If the politician mind is left entirely to itself, we could expect no better tangible result of the greatest international convulsion on record than a rearrangement of frontiers, a redistribution of power and possessions and a few desirable or undesirable developments of international, commercial and other relations. That is one disastrous possibility leading to more disastrous convulsions—so long as the problem is not solved—against which the future of the world is by no means secure. Still, since the mind of humanity has been greatly moved and its sentiments powerfully awakened, since the sense is becoming fairly wide-spread that the old status of things is no longer tolerable and the undesirability of an international balance reposing on a ring of national egoisms held in check only by mutual fear and hesitation, by ineffective arbitration treaties and Hague tribunals and the blundering discords of a European Concert must be now fairly clear even to the politician mind, we might

expect that some serious attempt towards the beginning of a new order should be the result of the moral collapse of the old. The passions and hatreds and selfish national hopes raised by the war must certainly be a great obstacle in the way and may easily render futile or of a momentary stability any such beginning. But, if nothing else, the mere exhaustion and internal reaction produced after the relaxing of the tenacity of the struggle, might give time for new ideas, feelings, forces, events to emerge which will counteract this pernicious influence.¹

Still, the most that we could at all expect must needs be very little. In the internal life of the nations, the ultimate effects of the war cannot fail to be powerful and radical, for there everything is ready, the pressure felt has been enormous and the expansion after it has been removed must be correspondingly great in its results; but in international life we can only look forward at the best to a certain minimum of radical change which, however small, might yet in itself turn out to be an irrevocable departure, a seed of sufficient vitality to ensure the inevitability of future growth. If, indeed, developments had occurred before the end of this world-wide struggle

¹ Written originally in 1916 before the end of the war. This happier possibility could not immediately materialise, but the growing insecurity, confusion and disaster have made the creation of some international system more and more imperative if modern civilisation is not to collapse in bloodshed and chaos. The result of this necessity has been first the creation of the League of Nations and afterwards the U.N.O.: neither has proved very satisfactory from the political point of view, but henceforward the existence of some such arranged centre of order has become very evidently indispensable.

strong enough to change the general mind of Europe, to force the dwarfish thoughts of its rulers into greater depths and generate a more wide-reaching sense of the necessity for radical change than has yet been developed, more might have been hoped for; but as the great conflict drew nearer to its close, no such probability emerged; the dynamic period during which in such a crisis the effective ideas and tendencies of men are formed, passed without the creation of any great and profound impulse. There were only two points on which the general mind of the peoples was powerfully affected. First, there was generated a sense of revolt against the possible repetition of this vast catastrophe; still more strongly felt was the necessity for finding means to prevent the unparalleled dislocation of the economic life of the race which was brought about by the convulsion. Therefore, it is in these two directions that some real development could be expected; for so much must be attempted if the general expectation and desire are to be satisfied and to trifle with these would be to declare the political intelligence of Europe bankrupt. That failure would convict its governments and ruling classes of moral and intellectual impotence and might, well in the end, provoke a general revolt of the European peoples against their existing institutions and the present blind and rudderless leadership.

There was to be expected, then, some attempt to provide a settled and effective means for the regulation and minimising of war, for the limitation of armaments, for the satisfactory disposal of dangerous disputes and especially, though this presents the greatest difficulty, for meeting that conflict of commercial aims and interests which is now the really effective, although by no

means the only factor in the conditions that compel the recurrence of war. If this new arrangement contained in itself the seed of international control, if it turned out to be a first step towards a loose international formation or perhaps contained its elements or initial lines or even a first scheme to which the life of humanity could turn for a mould of growth in its reaching out to a unified existence, then, however rudimentary or unsatisfactory this arrangement might be at first, the future would carry in it an assured promise. Once begun, it will be impossible for mankind to draw back and, whatever difficulties, disappointments, struggles, reactions, checks or brutal interruptions might mark the course of this development, they would be bound to help in the end rather than hinder the final and inevitable result.

Still, it would be vain to hope that the principle of international control will be thoroughly effective at first or that this loose formation, which is likely to be in the beginning half form, half nebula, will prevent farther conflicts, explosions, catastrophes.¹ The difficulties are too great. The mind of the race has not as yet the necessary experience; the intellect of its ruling classes has not acquired the needed minimum of wisdom and foresight; the temperament of the peoples has not developed the indispensable instincts and sentiments. Whatever arrangement is made will proceed on the old basis of national egoisms, hungers, cupidities, self-assertions and will simply endeavour to regulate them just enough to prevent too disastrous collisions. The first

¹ This prediction, easy enough to make at that time, and the estimate of its causes have been fully justified by the course of events and the outbreak of a still greater, more disastrous war.

means tried will necessarily be insufficient because too much respect will be paid to those very egoisms which it is sought to control. The causes of strife will remain; the temper that engenders it will live on, perhaps exhausted and subdued for a time in certain of its activities, but unexorcised; the means of strife may be controlled but will be allowed to remain. Armaments may be restricted, but will not be abolished; national armies may be limited in numbers—an illusory limitation—but they will be maintained; science will still continue to minister ingeniously to the art of collective massacre. War can only be abolished if national armies are abolished and even then with difficulty, by the development of some other machinery which humanity does not yet know how to form or, even if formed, will not for some time be able or willing perfectly to utilise. And there is no chance of national armies being abolished; for each nation distrusts all the others too much, has too many ambitions and hungers, needs to remain armed, if for nothing else, to guard its markets and keep down its dominions, colonies, subject peoples. Commercial ambitions and rivalries, political pride, dreams, longings, jealousies are not going to disappear as if by the touch of a magic wand merely because Europe has in an insane clash of long-ripening ambitions, jealousies and hatreds decimated its manhood and flung in three years the resources of decades into the melting pot of war. The awakening must go much deeper, lay hold upon much purer roots of action before the psychology of nations will be transmuted into that something “wondrous, rich and strange” which will eliminate war and international collisions from our distressed and stumbling human life.

National egoism remaining, the means of strife remaining, its causes, opportunities, excuses will never be wanting. The present war came because all the leading nations had long been so acting as to make it inevitable; it came because there was a Balkan imbroglio and a Near-Eastern hope and commercial and colonial rivalries in Northern Africa over which the dominant nations had been battling in peace long before one or more of them grasped at the rifle and the shell. Sarajevo and Belgium were mere determining circumstances; to get to the root causes we have to go back as far at least as Agadir and Algeciras. From Morocco to Tripoli, from Tripoli to Thrace and Macedonia, from Macedonia to Herzegovina the electric chain ran with that inevitable logic of causes and results, actions and their fruits which we call Karma, creating minor detonations on its way till it found the inflammable point and created that vast explosion which has filled Europe with blood and ruins. Possibly the Balkan question may be definitively settled, though that is far from certain; possibly the definitive expulsion of Germany from Africa may ease the situation by leaving that continent in the possession of three or four nations who are for the present allies. But even if Germany were expunged from the map and its resentments and ambitions deleted as a European factor, the root causes of strife would remain. There will still be an Asiatic question of the Near and the Far East which may take on new conditions and appearances and regroup its constituent elements, but must remain so fraught with danger that if it is stupidly settled or does not settle itself, it would be fairly safe to predict the next great human collision with Asia as either its first field or its origin. Even if that difficulty

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

is settled, new causes of strife must necessarily develop where the spirit of national egoism and cupidity seeks for satisfaction; and so long as it lives, satisfaction it must seek and repletion can never permanently satisfy it. The tree must bear its own proper fruit, and Nature is always a diligent gardener.

The limitation of armies and armaments is an illusory remedy. Even if there could be found an effective international means of control, it would cease to operate as soon as the clash of war actually came. The European conflict has shown that, in the course of war, a country can be turned into a huge factory of arms and a nation convert its whole peaceful manhood into an army. England which started with a small and even insignificant armed force, was able in the course of a single year to raise millions of men and in two to train and equip them and throw them effectively into the balance. This object lesson is sufficient to show that the limitation of armies and armaments can only lighten the national burden in peace, leaving it by that very fact more resources for the conflict, but cannot prevent or even minimise the disastrous intensity and extension of war. Nor will the construction of a stronger international law with a more effective sanction behind it be an indubitable or perfect remedy. It is often asserted that this is what is needed; just as in the nation Law has replaced and suppressed the old barbaric method of settling disputes between individuals, families or clans by the arbitration of Might, a similar development ought to be possible in the life of nations. Perhaps in the end; but to expect it to operate successfully at once is to ignore both the real basis of the effective authority of Law and the difference between the constituents of a developed nation and the

constituents of that ill-developed international comity which it is proposed to initiate.

The authority of Law in a nation or community does not really depend on any so-called "majesty" or mystic power in man-made rules and enactments. Its real sources of power are two, first, the strong interest of the majority or of a dominant minority or of the community as a whole in maintaining it and secondly, the possession of a sole armed force, police and military, which makes that interest effective. The metaphorical sword of justice can only act because there is a real sword behind it to enforce its decrees and its penalties against the rebel and the dissident. And the essential character of this armed force is that it belongs to nobody, to no individual or constituent group of the community except alone to the State, the king or the governing class or body in which sovereign authority is centred. Nor can there be any security if the armed force of the State is balanced or its sole effectivity diminished by the existence of other armed forces belonging to groups and individuals and free in any degree from the central control or able to use their power against the governing authority. Even so, even with this authority backed by a sole and centralised armed force, Law has not been able to prevent strife of a kind between individuals and classes because it has not been able to remove the psychological, economic and other causes of strife. Crime with its penalties is always a kind of mutual violence, a kind of revolt and civil strife and even in the best-policed and most law-abiding communities crime is still rampant. Even the organisation of crime is possible although it cannot usually endure or fix its power, because it has the whole vehement sentiment and effective organisation of the community against it.

But what is more to the purpose, Law has not been able to prevent, although it has minimised, the possibility of civil strife and violent or armed discord within the organised nation. Whenever a class or an opinion has thought itself oppressed or treated with intolerable injustice, has found the Law and its armed force so entirely associated with an opposite interest that the suspension of the principle of law and an insurgence of the violence of revolt against the violence of oppression were or appeared the only remedy, it has, if it thought it had a chance of success, appealed to the ancient arbitration of Might. Even in our own days we have seen the most law-abiding of nations staggering on the verge of a disastrous civil war and responsible statesmen declaring their readiness to appeal to it if a measure disagreeable to them were enforced, even though it was passed by the supreme legislative authority with the sanction of the sovereign.

But in any loose international formation presently possible the armed force would still be divided among its constituent groups; it would belong to them, not to any sovereign authority, super-State or federal council. The position would resemble the chaotic organisation of the feudal ages in which every prince and baron had his separate jurisdiction and military resources and could defy the authority of the sovereign if he were powerful enough or if he could command the necessary number and strength of allies among his peers. And in this case, there would not be even the equivalent of a feudal sovereign—a king who, if nothing else, if not really a monarch, was at least the first among his peers—with the prestige of sovereignty and some means of developing it into a strong and permanent actuality.

Nor would the matter be much improved if there were a composite armed force of control set over the nations and their separate military strength; for this composite would break apart and its elements return to their conflicting sources on the outbreak of overt strife. In the developed nation the individual is the unit and he is lost among the mass of individuals, unable safely to calculate the force he could command in a conflict, afraid of all other individuals not bound to him, because he sees in them natural supporters of outraged authority; revolt is to him a most dangerous and incalculable business, even the initial conspiracy fraught at every moment with a thousand terrors and dangers that lower in terrible massed array against a small modicum of scattered chances. The soldier also is a solitary individual, afraid of all the rest, a terrible punishment suspended over him and ready to fall at the least sign of insubordination, never sure of a confident support among his fellows or, even if a little certain, not assured of any effective support from the civil population and therefore deprived of that moral force which would encourage him to defy the authority of Law and Government. And in his ordinary sentiment he belongs no longer to individual or family or class, but to the State and the country or at the very least to the machine of which he is a part. But here the constituents would be a small number of nations, some of them powerful empires, well able to look around them, measure their own force, make sure of their allies, calculate the force against them; the chances of success or failure would be all that they would have to consider. And the soldiers of the composite army would belong at heart to their country and not at all to the nebulous entity which controlled them.

Therefore, pending the actual evolution of an international State so constituted as to be something other than a mere loose conglomerate of nations or rather a palaver of the deputies of national governments, the reign of peace and unity dreamed of by the idealist could never be possible by these political or administrative means or, if possible, could never be secure. Even if actual war were eliminated, still as in the nation crime between individuals exists, or as other means such as disastrous general strikes are used in the war of classes, so here too other means of strife would be developed, much more disastrous perhaps than war. And even they would be needed and inevitable in the economy of Nature, not only to meet the psychological necessity of egoistic discord and passion and ambition, but as an outlet and an aim for the sense of injustice, of oppressed rights, of thwarted possibilities. The law is always the same, that wherever egoism is the root of action it must bear its own proper results and reactions and, however minimised and kept down they may be by an external machinery, their eventual outburst is sure and can be delayed but not prevented for ever.

It is apparent at least that no loose formation without a powerful central control could be satisfactory, effective or enduring, even if it were much less loose, much more compact than anything that seems at present likely to evolve in the near future. There must be in the nature of things a second step, a movement towards greater rigidity, constriction of national liberties and the erection of a unique central authority with a uniform control over the earth's peoples.

CHAPTER XV

SOME TIMES OF FULFILMENT

WHAT favoured form, force, system among the many that are possible now or likely to emerge hereafter will be entrusted by the secret Will in things with the external unification of mankind, is an interesting and to those who can look beyond the narrow horizon of passing events, a fascinating subject of speculation; but unfortunately it can at present be nothing more. The very multitude of the possibilities in a period of humanity so rife with the most varied and potent forces, so fruitful of new subjective developments and objective mutations creates an impenetrable mist in which only vague forms of giants can be half glimpsed. Certain ideas suggested by the present status of forces and by past experience are all that we can permit ourselves in so hazardous a field.

We have ruled out of consideration as a practical impossibility in the present international conditions and the present state of international mentality and morality the idea of an immediate settlement on the basis of an association of free nationalities, although this would be obviously the ideal basis. For it would take as its founding motive power a harmony of the two great principles actually in presence, nationalism and internationalism. Its adoption would mean that the problem of human unity would be approached at once on a rational and a sound moral basis, a recognition, on one side, of the right

of all large natural groupings of men to live and to be themselves and the enthronement of respect for national liberty as an established principle of human conduct, on the other, an adequate sense of the need for order, help, a mutual, a common participation, a common life and interests in the unified and associated human race. The ideal society or State is that in which respect for individual liberty and free growth of the personal being to his perfection is harmonised with respect for the needs, efficiency, solidarity, natural growth and organic perfection of the corporate being, the society or nation. In an ideal aggregate of all humanity, in the international society or State, national liberty and free national growth and self-realisation ought in the same way to be progressively harmonised with the solidarity and unified growth and perfection of the human race.

Therefore, if this basic principle were admitted, there might indeed be fluctuations due to the difficulty of a perfect working combination, as in the growth of the national aggregate there has been sometimes a stress on liberty and at others a stress on efficiency and order; but since the right conditions of the problem would have been recognised from the beginning and not left to be worked out in a blind tug of war, there would be some chance of an earlier reasonable solution with much less friction and violence in the process.

But there is little chance of such an unprecedented good fortune for mankind. Ideal conditions cannot be expected, for they demand a psychological clarity, a diffused reasonableness and scientific intelligence and, above all, a moral elevation and rectitude to which neither the mass of mankind nor its leaders and rulers have yet made any approach. In their absence, not reason and justice

and mutual kindliness, but the trend of forces and their practical and legal adjustment must determine the working out of this as of other problems. And just as the problem of the State and the individual has been troubled and obscured not only by the conflict between individual egoism and the corporate egoism of the society, but by the continual clash between intermediate powers; class strife, quarrels of Church and State, king and nobles, king and commons, aristocracy and demos, capitalist bourgeoisie and labour proletariat, this problem too of nation and international humanity is certain to be troubled by the claims of just such intermediate powers. To say nothing of commercial interests and combinations, cultural or racial sympathies, movements of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Anglo-Saxonism, with a possible Pan-Americanism and Pan-Mongolianism looming up in the future, to say nothing of yet other unborn monsters, there will always be the great intermediate factor of Imperialism, that huge armed and dominant Titan, that must by its very nature demand its own satisfaction, at the cost of every suppressed or inconvenient national unit and assert its own needs as prior to the needs of the new-born international comity. That satisfaction, presumably, it must have for a time, that demand it will be for long impossible to resist. At any rate, to ignore its claims or to imagine that they can be put aside with a spurt of the writer's pen, is to build symmetrical castles on the golden sands of an impracticable idealism.

Forces take the first place in actual effectuation; moral principles, reason, justice only so far as forces can be compelled or persuaded to admit them or, as more often happens, use them as subservient aids or inspiring battle

cries, a camouflage for their own interests. Ideas sometimes leap out as armed forces and break their way through the hedge of unideal powers; sometimes they reverse the position and make interests their subordinate helpers, a fuel for their own blaze; sometimes they conquer by martyrdom: but ordinarily they have to work not only by a half-covert pressure but by accommodation to powerful forces or must even bribe and cajole them or work through and behind them. It cannot be otherwise until the average and the aggregate man become more of an intellectual, moral and spiritual being and less predominantly the vital and emotional half-reasoning human animal. The unrealised international idea will have for some time at least to work by this secondary method and through such accommodations with the realised forces of nationalism and imperialism.

It may be questioned whether by the time that things are ready for the elaboration of a firm and settled system, the idea of a just internationalism based on respect for the principle of free nationalities may not by the efforts of the world's thinkers and intellectuals have made so much progress as to exercise an irresistible pressure on States and Governments and bring about its own acceptance in large part, if not in the entirety of its claims. The answer is that States and Governments yield usually to a moral pressure only so far as it does not compel them to sacrifice their vital interests. No established empire will easily liberate its dependent parts or allow, unless compelled, a nation now subject to it to sit at the board of an international council as its free equal. The old enthusiasm for liberty is an ideal which made France intervene to aid the evolution of a free Italy or France and England to create a new Greek nation. The national

liberties for which respect was demanded during the war even at the point of the sword—or, we should say now, even with the voice of the cannon shell—were those already established and considered therefore to have the right still to exist. All that was proposed beyond that limit was the restoration to already existing free States of men of their own nationality still under a foreign yoke. It was proposed to realise a greater Serbia, a greater Rumania, the restoration of “unredeemed” Italy, and the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Autonomy under Russian sovereignty was all that was promised to Poland till the German victory over Russia altered the interest and with it the idealism of the Allies. Autonomy of a kind under an imperial sovereignty or where that does not yet exist, under imperial “protection” or “influence” are by many considered as more practical ideas now than the restoration of national freedom. That is a sign perhaps of the obscure growth of the idea of federated empires which we have discussed as one of the possibilities of the future. National liberty as an absolute ideal has no longer the old general acceptance and creative force. Nations struggling for liberty have to depend on their own strength and enthusiasm; they can expect only a tepid or uncertain support except from enthusiastic individuals or small groups whose aid is purely vocal and ineffective. Many even of the most advanced intellectuals warmly approve of the idea of subordinate autonomy for nations now subject, but seem to look with impatience on their velleities of complete independence. Even so far has imperialism travelled on its prosperous road and the imperial aggregate impressed its figure on the freest imaginations as an accomplished power in human progress.

How much further may not this sentiment travel under the new impulse of humanity to organise its international existence on larger and more convenient lines! It is even possible that the impatience openly expressed by the German in his imperial days against the continued existence of small nationalities opposing their settled barrier of prescribed rights to large political and commercial combinations may, while softening its rigour, yet justify its claim in the future, may be accepted by the general sense of humanity though in a less brutal, a less arrogant and aggressively egoistic form. That is to say, there may grow up a stronger tendency in the political reason of mankind to desire, perhaps eventually to insist on the rearrangement of States in a system of large imperial combines and not on the basis of a *status quo* of mixed empires and free nationalities.¹

But even if this development does not take place or does not effect itself in time, the actually existing free and non-imperial States will find themselves included indeed in whatever international council or other system may be established, but this inclusion is likely to be very much like the position of the small nobles in mediaeval times in relation to the great feudal princes, a position rather of vassals than of equals. The war brought into relief the fact that it is only the great Powers that really count in the international scale; all others merely exist by sufferance or by protection or by alliance. So long as the world was arranged on the principle of separate nationalities, this might have been only a latent reality without

¹ If the ambitions of Italy, Germany and Japan and the Fascist idea generally had triumphed, such an order of things might have eventuated.

actually important effects on the life of the smaller nations, but this immunity might cease when the necessity of combined action or a continual active interaction became a recognised part or the foundation of the world-system. The position of a minor State standing out against the will of large Powers or a party of Powers would be worse even than that of small neutrals in the present war or of a private company surrounded by great Trusts. It would be compelled to accept the lead of one group or another of the leviathans around it and its independent weight or action in the council of nations would be nil.

Undoubtedly, the right of small nations to exist and assert their interests against imperialistic aggression is still a force; it was one at least of the issues in the international collision. But the assertion of this right against the aggression of a single ambitious Power is one thing; its assertion as against any arrangement for the common interest of the nations decided upon by a majority of the great Powers would very likely in the near future be regarded in quite another light. The inconvenience of a number of small neutrals claiming to stand out and be as little affected as possible by an immense international conflict was acutely felt not only by the actual combatants who were obliged to use sometimes an indirect, sometimes a direct pressure to minimise the inconveniences, but by the smaller neutrals themselves to whom their neutrality was preferable only as a lesser evil than the burden and disaster of active participation in the struggle. In any international system, the self-assertion of these smaller liberties would probably be viewed as a petty egoism and intolerable obstacle to great common interests, or, it may be, to the decision of conflicts between

great world-wide interests. It is probable indeed that in any constitution of international unity the great Powers would see to it that their voice was equal to their force and influence; but even if the constitution were outwardly democratic, yet, in effect, it would become an oligarchy of the great Powers. Constitutions can only disguise facts, they cannot abrogate them: for whatever ideas the form of the constitution may embody, its working is always that of the actually realised forces which can use it with effect. Most governments either have now or have passed through a democratic form, but nowhere yet has there been a real democracy; it has been everywhere the propertied and professional classes and the bourgeoisie who governed in the name of the people. So too in any international Council or control it would be a few great empires that would govern in the name of humanity.

At the most, if it were otherwise, it could be only for a short time, unless some new forces came into their own which would arrest or dissolve the tendency now dominant in the world towards large imperial aggregations. The position would then be for a time very much like that of feudal Europe while it was in abortive travail of a united Christendom,—a great criss-cross of heterogeneous, complicated, overlapping and mutually interpenetrating interests, a number of small Powers counting for something, but overshadowed and partly coerced by a few great Powers, the great Powers working out the inevitable complication of their allied, divided and contrary interests by whatever means the new world-system provided and using for that purpose whatever support of classes, ideas, tendencies, institutions they could find. There would be questions of Asiatic, African,

American fields and markets, struggles of classes starting as national questions becoming international; Socialism, Anarchism and the remainder of the competitive age of humanity struggling together for predominance; clashes of Europeanism, Asiaticism, Americanism. And from this great tangle some result would have to be worked out. It might well be by methods very different from those with which history has made us so familiar; war might be eliminated or reduced to a rare phenomenon of civil war in the international commonwealth or confederacy; new forms of coercion, such as the commercial which we now see to be growing in frequency, might ordinarily take its place; other devices might be brought into being of which we have at present no conception. But the situation would be essentially the same for humanity in general as has confronted lesser unformed aggregates in the past and would have to progress to similar issues of success, modified realisation or failure.

The most natural simplification of the problem, though not one that looks now possible, would be the division of the world into a few imperial aggregates consisting partly of federal, partly of confederate commonwealths or empires. Although unrealisable with the present strength of national egoisms, the growth of ideas and the force of changing circumstances might some day bring about such a creation and this might lead to a closer confederacy. America seems to be turning dimly towards a better understanding between the increasingly cosmopolitan United States and the Latin Republics of Central and South America which may in certain contingencies materialise itself into a confederate inter-American State. The idea of a confederate Teutonic

empire, if Germany and Austria had not been entirely broken by the result of the war, might well have realised itself in the near future; and even though they are now broken it might still realise itself in a more distant future. Similar aggregates may emerge in the Asiatic world. Such a distribution of mankind in large natural aggregates would have the advantage of simplifying a number of difficult world-problems and with the growth of peace, mutual understanding and larger ideas might lead to a comparatively painless aggregation in a World-State.

Another possible solution is suggested by the precedent of the evolution of the nation-type out of its first loose feudal form. As there the continual clash of various forces and equipollent powers necessitated the emergence of one of them, at first only prominent among his equals, the feudal king, into the type of a centralised monarchy, so conceivably, if the empires and nations of the world failed to arrive at a peaceful solution among themselves, if the class troubles, the inter-commercial troubles, the conflict of various new ideas and tendencies resulted in a long confusion and turmoil and constant changing, there might emerge a king-nation with the mission of evolving a real and settled out of a semi-chaotic or half order. We have concluded that the military conquest of the world by a single nation is not possible except under conditions which do not exist and of which there is as yet no visible prospect. But an imperial nation, such as England for example, spread all over the world, possessing the empire of the seas, knowing how to federate successfully its constituent parts and organise their entire potential strength, having the skill to make itself the representative and protector of the most progressive and liberal tendencies of the new times, allying itself with other forces

and nations interested in their triumph and showing that it had the secret of a just and effective international organisation, might conceivably become the arbiter of the nations and the effective centre of an international government. Such a possibility in any form is as yet entirely remote, but it could become under new circumstances a realisable possibility of the future.

Conceivably, if the task of organising the world proved too difficult, if no lasting agreement could be arrived at or no firmly constituted legal authority created, the task might be undertaken not by a single empire, but by two or three great imperial Powers sufficiently near in interest and united in idea to sink possible differences and jealousies and strong enough to dominate or crush all resistance and enforce some sort of effective international law and government. The process would then be a painful one and might involve much brutality of moral and economic coercion, but if it commanded the prestige of success and evolved some tolerable form of legality and justice or even only of prosperous order, it might in the end conciliate a general moral support and prove a starting-point for freer and better forms.

Yet another possibility that cannot be ignored is that the merely inter-governmental and political evolution which alone we have considered, may be broken in upon by the long-threatened war of classes. Labour internationalism broke down, like every other form of internationalism—scientific, cultural, pacific, religious—under the fierce test of war and during the great crisis the struggle between Labour and Capital was suspended. It was then hoped that after the war the spirit of unity, conciliation and compromise would continue to reign and the threatened conflict would be averted. Nothing

in human nature or in history warranted any such confident trust in the hopes of the moment. The interclass conflict has long been threatening like the European collision. The advent of the latter was preceded by large hopes of world-peace and attempts at a European concert and treaties of arbitration which would render war finally impossible. The hope of a concert between Labour and Capital idyllically settling all their acute causes of conflict in amoebaeal stanzas of melodious compromise for the sake of the higher national interests is likely to be as treacherous and delusive. Even the socialisation of governments and the increasing nationalisation of industry will not remove the root cause of conflict. For there will still remain the crucial question of the form and conditions of the new State socialism, whether it shall be regulated in the interests of Labour or of the capitalistic State and whether its direction shall be democratic by the workers themselves or oligarchic or bureaucratic by the present directing classes. This question may well lead to struggles which may easily grow into an international or at least an inter-European conflict; it might even rend each nation in two instead of uniting it as in the war crisis. And the results of such a struggle may have an incalculable effect, either in changing the ideas and life of men dynamically in new directions or in breaking down the barriers of existing nations and empires.¹

¹ This hypothetic forecast was fully justified—and tended to become more and more so—by the post-war development of national and international life. The inhuman butchery in Spain, the development of two opposite types of Socialism in Russia, Italy and Germany, the uneasy political situation in France were examples of the fulfilment of these tendencies.

But this tendency has reached its acme in the emergence of Communism and it now seems probable that the future will belong to a struggle between Communism and a surviving capitalistic Industrialism in the New World or even between Communism and a more moderate system of social democracy in the two continents of the Old World. But generally speaking, speculations noted down in this chapter at a time when the possibilities of the future were very different from what they are now and all was in a flux and welter of dubious confusion, are out of date since an even more stupendous conflict has intervened and swept the previous existing conditions out of existence. Nevertheless, some of them still survive and threaten the safe evolution of the new tentative world-order or, indeed, any future world-order.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PROBLEM OF UNIFORMITY AND LIBERTY

THE question with which we started has reached some kind of answer. After sounding as thoroughly as our lights permit the possibility of a political and administrative unification of mankind by political and economic motives and through purely political and administrative means, it has been concluded that it is not only possible, but that the thoughts and tendencies of mankind and the result of current events and existing forces and necessities have turned decisively in this direction. This is one of the dominant drifts which the World-Nature has thrown up in the flow of human development and it is the logical consequence of the past history of mankind and of our present circumstances. At the same time nothing justifies us in predicting its painless or rapid development or even its sure and eventual success. We have seen some of the difficulties in the way; we have seen also what are the lines on which it may practically proceed to the overcoming of those difficulties. We have concluded that the one line it is not likely to take is the ideal, that which justice and the highest expediency and the best thought of mankind demand, that which would ensure it the greatest possibility of an enduring success. It is not likely to take perfectly, until a probably much later period of our collective evolution, the form of a federation of free and equal nations or adopt as its motive a perfect harmony between

the contending principles of nationalism and internationalism.

And now we have to consider the second aspect of the problem, its effect on the springs of human life and progress. The political and administrative unification of mankind is not only possible but foreshadowed by our present evolution; the collective national egoism which resists it may be overborne by an increasing flood of the present unifying tendency to which the anguish of the European war gave a body and an articulate voice. But the question remains whether not in its first loose formation, but as it develops and becomes more complete and even vigorous, a strictly unified order will not necessarily involve a considerable overriding of the liberties of mankind, individual and collective, and an oppressive mechanism by which the free development of the soul-life of humanity will be for some time at least seriously hindered or restricted or in danger of an excessive repression. We have seen that a period of loose formation is in such developments usually followed by a period of restriction and constriction in which a more rigid unification will be attempted so that firm moulds may be given to the new unity. And this has meant in past unifications and is likely to mean here also a suppression of that principle of liberty in human life which is the most precious gain of humanity's past spiritual, political and social struggles. The circle of progression is likely to work itself out again on this new line of advance.

Such a development would be not only probable, but inevitable if the unification of mankind proceeded in accordance with the Germanic gospel of the increasing domination of the world by the one fit empire, nation, race. It would be equally inevitable if the means employed

by Destiny were the domination of humanity by two or three great imperial nations; or if the effectuating force were a closely organised united Europe which would, developing the scheme of a certain kind of political thinkers, take in hand the rest of the world and hold the darker-coloured races of mankind in tutelage for an indefinite period.

The ostensible object and justification of such a tutelage would be to civilise, that is to say, to Europeanise the less developed races. Practically, we know that it would mean their exploitation, since in the course of human nature the benevolent but forceful guardian would feel himself justified in making the best profit out of his advantageous situation, always of course in the interest at once of his own development and that of the world in general. The regime would rest upon superior force for its maintenance and oppose itself to the velleities of freedom in the governed on the ground either that they were unfit or that the aspiration was immature, two arguments that may well remain valid for ever, since they can never be refuted to the satisfaction of those who advance them. At first this regime might be so worked as to preserve the principle of individual liberty for the governing races while enforcing a beneficial subjection upon the ruled; but that could not endure. The experience of the past teaches us that the habit of preferring the principle of authority to the principle of liberty is engendered in an imperial people, reacts upon it at home and leads it first insensibly and then by change of thought and the development of a fate in circumstances to the sacrifice of its own inner freedom. There could be only two outlets to such a situation, either the growth of the principle of liberty among the peoples still subject or, let us say, administered by others

for their own benefit, or else its general decline in the world. Either the higher state must envelop from above or the lower from below; they cannot subsist perpetually together in the same human economy. But nine times out of ten, in the absence of circumstances ending the connection, it is the unhappier possibility that conquers.¹

All these means of unification would proceed practically by the use of force and compulsion and any deliberately planned, prolonged and extended use of restrictive means tends to discourage the respect for the principle of liberty in those who apply the compulsion as well as the fact of liberty in those to whom it is applied. It favours the growth of the opposite principle of dominating authority whose whole tendency is to introduce rigidity, uniformity, a mechanised and therefore eventually an unprogressive system of life. This is a psychological relation of cause and effect whose working cannot be avoided except by taking care to found all use of authority on the widest possible basis of free consent. But by their very nature and origin the regimes of unification thus introduced would be debarred from the free employment of this corrective; for they would have to proceed by compulsion of what might be very largely a reluctant material and the imposing of their will for the elimination of all resisting forces and tendencies. They would be compelled to repress, diminish, perhaps even abolish all forms of liberty which their experience found to be used for

¹ These considerations have now become irrelevant to the actual condition of things. Asia is now for the most part free or in the process of liberation, the idea of a dominant West or a dominant Europe has no longer any force and has indeed receded out of men's minds and practically out of existence.

fostering the spirit of revolt or of resistance; that is to say, all those larger liberties of free action and free self-expression which make up the best, the most vigorous, the most stimulating part of human freedom. They would be obliged to abolish, first by violence and then by legal suppression and repression, all the elements of what we now call national freedom; in the process individual liberty would be destroyed both in the parts of humanity coerced and, by inevitable reaction and contagion, in the imperial nation or nations. Relapse in this direction is always easy, because the assertion of his human dignity and freedom is a virtue man has only acquired by long evolution and painful endeavour; to respect the freedom of others he is still less naturally prone, though without it his own liberty can never be really secure; but to oppress and dominate where he can—often, be it noted, with excellent motives—and otherwise to be half dupe and half serf of those who can dominate, are his inborn animal propensities. Therefore in fact all unnecessary restriction of the few common liberties man has been able to organise for himself becomes a step backward, whatever immediate gain it may bring; and every organisation of oppression or repression beyond what the imperfect conditions of human nature and society render inevitable, becomes, no matter where or by whom it is practised, a blow to the progress of the whole race.

If, on the other hand, the formal unification of the race is effectuated by a combination of free nations and empires and if these empires strive to become psychological realities and therefore free organisms, or if by that time the race has advanced so far that the principle of free national or cultural grouping within a unified mankind can be adopted, then the danger of retrogression will be greatly

diminished. Still, it will exist. For, as we have seen, the principle of order, of uniformity is the natural tendency of a period of unification. The principle of liberty offers a natural obstacle to the growth of uniformity and, although perfectly reconcilable with a true order and easily coexistent with an order already established into which it has been fitted, is not so easily reconciled as a matter of practice with a new order which demands from it new sacrifices for which it is not yet psychologically prepared. This in itself need not matter, for all movement forward implies a certain amount of friction and difficulty of adjustment; and if in the process liberty suffered a few shocks on one side, and order a few shocks on the other, they would still shake down easily enough into a new adjustment after a certain amount of experience. Unfortunately, it is the nature of every self-asserting tendency or principle in the hour of its growth, when it finds circumstances favourable, to over-assert itself and exaggerate its claim, to carry its impulses to a one-sided fruition, to affirm its despotic rule and to depress and even to trample upon other tendencies and principles and especially on those which it instinctively feels to be the farthest removed from its own nature. And if it finds a resistance in these opposite powers, then its impulse of self-assertion becomes angry, violent, tyrannical; instead of the friction of adjustment we have an inimical struggle stumbling through violent vicissitudes, action and reaction, evolution and revolution till one side or the other prevails in the conflict.

This is what has happened in the past development of mankind; the struggle of order and uniformity against liberty has been the dominant fact of all great human formations and developments—religious, social, political. There is as yet no apparent ground for predicting a more

reasonable principle of development in the near future. Man seems indeed to be becoming more generally a reasoning animal than in any known past period of his history, but he has not by that become, except in one or two directions, much more of a reasonable mind and a harmonious spirit; for he still uses his reason much more commonly to justify strife and mutual contradiction than to arrive at a wise agreement. And always his mind and reason are very much at the mercy of his vital desires and passions. Therefore we must suppose that even under the best circumstances the old method of development will assert itself and the old struggle be renewed in the attempt at human unification. The principle of authority and order will attempt a mechanical organisation; the principle of liberty will resist and claim a more flexible, free and spacious system. The two ancient enemies will struggle for the control of the human unity as they did in the past for the control of the growing form of the nation. In the process, the circumstances being favourable to the narrower power, both national and individual liberty are likely to go to the wall—happy if they are not set against it before a firing platoon of laws and restrictions to receive a military quietus.

This might not happen if within the nations themselves the spirit of individual liberty still flourished in its old vigour; for that would then demand, both from an innate sympathy and for its own sake, respect for the liberties of all the constituent nations. But, as far as all present appearances go to show, we are entering into a period in which the ideal of individual liberty is destined to an entire eclipse under the shadow of the State idea, if not to a sort of temporary death or at least of long stupor, coma and hibernation. The constriction and mechanisation

of the unifying process is likely to coincide with a simultaneous process of constriction and mechanisation within each constituting unit. Where then in this double process will the spirit of liberty find its safeguard or its alimentation? The old practical formulations of freedom would disappear in the double process and the only hope of healthy progress would lie in a new formulation of liberty produced by a new powerful movement spiritual or intellectual of the human mind which will reconcile individual liberty with the collective ideal of a communal life and the liberty of the group-unit with the new-born necessity of a more united life for the human race.

Meanwhile, we have to consider how far it is either likely or possible to carry the principle of unification in those more outward and mechanical aspects which the external, that is to say, political and administrative method is prone to favour, and how far they will in their more extreme formulations favour or retard the true progress of the race to its perfection. We have to consider how far the principle of nationality itself is likely to be affected, whether there is any chance of its entire dissolution or, if it is preserved, what place the subordinated nation-unit will take in the new united life. This involves the question of control, the idea of the "Parliament of Man" and other ideas of political organisation as applied to this new portentous problem in the science of collective living. Thirdly, there is the question of uniformity and how far uniformity is either healthful to the race or necessary to unity. It is evident that we enter here upon problems which we shall have to treat in a much more abstract fashion and with much less sense of actuality than those we have till now been handling.

For all this is in the dark future, and all the light we can have is from past experience and the general principles of life and nature and sociology; the present gives us only a dim light on the solution which plunges a little further on in Time into a shadowy darkness full of incalculable possibilities. We can foresee nothing; we can only speculate and lay down principles.

We see that there are always two extreme possibilities with a number of more or less probable compromises. The nation is at present the firm group-unit of the human aggregation to which all other units tend to subordinate themselves; even the imperial has hitherto been only a development of the national and empires have existed in recent times, not consciously for the sake of a wider aggregation as did the imperial Roman world, but to serve the instinct of domination and expansion, the land hunger, money hunger, commodity hunger, the vital, intellectual, cultural aggressiveness of powerful and prosperous nations. This, however, does not secure the nation-unit from eventual dissolution in a larger principle of aggregation. Group-units there must always be in any human unity, even the most entire, intolerant and uniform, for that is the very principle not only of human nature, but of life and of every aggregation; we strike here on a fundamental law of universal existence, on the fundamental mathematics and physics of creation. But it does not follow that the nation need persist as the group-unit. It may disappear altogether; even now the rejection of the nation-idea has begun, the opposite idea of the *sans-patrie*, the citizen of the world, has been born and was a growing force before the war; and though temporarily overborne, silenced and discouraged, it is by no means slain, but is likely to revive with an increased

violence hereafter. On the other hand, the nation-idea may persist in full vitality or may assert in the event—after whatever struggle and apparent decline—its life, its freedom, its vigorous particularism within the larger unity. Finally, it may persist, but with a reduced and subjected vitality, or even without real vitality or any living spirit of particularism or separatism, as a convenience, an administrative rather than a psychological fact like a French department or an English county. But still it may preserve just sufficient mechanical distinctness to form a starting-point for that subsequent dissolution of human unity which will come about inevitably if the unification is more mechanical than real,—if, that is to say, it continues to be governed by the political and administrative motive, supported by the experience of economic and social or merely cultural ease, convenience and facts to serve as a material basis for the spiritual oneness of mankind.

So also with the ideal of uniformity; for with many minds, especially those of a rigid, mechanical cast, those in which logic and intellectuality are stronger than the imagination and the free vital instinct or those which are easily seduced by the beauty of an idea and prone to forget its limitations, uniformity is an ideal, even sometimes the highest ideal of which they can think. The uniformity of mankind is not an impossible eventuality, even though impracticable in the present circumstances and in certain directions hardly conceivable except in a far distant future. For certainly there is or has been an immense drive towards uniformity of life habits, uniformity of knowledge, uniformity political, social, economical, educational, and all this, if followed out to its final conclusion, will lead naturally

to a uniformity of culture. If that were realised, the one barrier left against a dead level of complete uniformity would be the difference of language; for language creates and determines thought even while it is created and determined by it, and so long as there is difference of language there will always be a certain amount of free variation of thought, of knowledge and of culture. But it is easily conceivable that the general uniformity of culture and intimate association of life will give irresistible force to the need already felt of a universal language, and a universal language once created or once adopted may end by killing out the regional languages as Latin killed out the languages of Gaul, Spain and Italy or as English has killed out Cornish, Gaelic, Erse and has been encroaching on the Welsh tongue. On the other hand, there is a revival nowadays, due to the growing subjectivism of the human mind, of the principle of free variation and refusal of uniformity. If this tendency triumphs, the unification of the race will have so to organise itself as to respect the free culture, thought, life of its constituent units. But there is also the third possibility of a dominant uniformity which will allow or even encourage such minor variations as do not threaten the foundations of its rule. And here again the variations may be within their limits vital, forceful, to a certain extent particularist though not separatist, or they may be quite minor tones and shades, yet sufficient to form a starting-point for the dissolution of uniformity into a new cycle of various progress.

So again with the governing organisation of the human race. It may be a rigid regimentation under a central authority such as certain socialistic schemes envisage for the nation, a regime suppressing all individual and

regional liberty in the interests of a close and uniform organisation of human training, economic life, social habits, morals, knowledge, religion even, every department of human activity. Such a development may seem impossible, as it would be indeed impracticable in the near future, because of the immense masses it would have to embrace, the difficulties it would have to surmount, the many problems that would have to be solved before it could become possible. But this idea of impossibility leaves out of consideration two important factors, the growth of Science with its increasingly easy manipulation of huge masses—witness the present war—and of large-scale problems and the rapid march of Socialism.¹ Supposing the triumph of the socialistic idea or of its practice in whatever disguise,—in all the continents—it might naturally lead to an international socialisation which would be rendered possible by the growth of science and scientific organisation and by the annihilation of space difficulties and numerical difficulties. On the other hand, it is possible that after a cycle of violent struggle between the ideal of regimentation and the ideal of liberty the socialistic period of mankind might prove comparatively of brief duration like that of monarchical absolutism in Europe and might be followed by another more inspired by the principles of philosophic Anarchism, that is to say, of unity based upon the completest individual freedom and freedom also of natural unforced grouping. A

¹ Even such apparent reactions as the now-defeated Fascist regime in Italy merely prepare or embody new possibilities of the principle of State control and direction which is the essence of Socialism.

compromise might also be reached, a dominant regimentation with a subordinate freedom more or less vital, but even if less vital, yet a starting-point for the dissolution of the regime when humanity begins to feel that regimentation is not its ultimate destiny and that a fresh cycle of search and experiment has become again indispensable to its future.

It is impossible here to consider these large questions with any thoroughness. To throw out certain ideas which may guide us in our approach to the problem of unification is all that we can attempt. The problem is vast and obscure and even a ray of light upon it here and there may help to diminish its difficulty and darkness.

PART TWO

CHAPTER XVII

NATURE'S LAW IN OUR PROGRESS— UNITY IN DIVERSITY, LAW AND LIBERTY

FOR man alone of terrestrial creatures to live rightly involves the necessity of knowing rightly, whether, as rationalism pretends, by the sole or dominant instrumentation of his reason or, more largely and complexly, by the sum of his faculties; and what he has to know is the true nature of being and its constant self-effectuation in the values of life, in less abstract language the law of Nature and especially of his own nature, the forces within him and around him and their right utilisation for his own greater perfection and happiness or for that and the greater perfection and happiness of his fellow creatures. In the old phrase his business is to learn to live according to Nature. But Nature can no longer be imaged, as once it was, as an eternal right rule from which man has wandered, since it is rather a thing itself changing, progressing, evolving, ascending from height to more elevated height, widening from limit to broader limit of its own possibilities. Yet in all this changing there are certain eternal principles or truths of being which remain the same and upon them as bed-rock, with them as a primary material and within them as a framework, our progress and perfection are compelled to take place. Otherwise there would be an infinite chaos and not a world ordered even in the clash of its forces.

The subhuman life of animal and plant is not subjected to this necessity of knowledge nor of that which is the necessary accompaniment of knowledge, a conscious will impelled always to execute what knowledge perceives. By this exemption it is saved from an immense amount of error, deformation and disease, for it lives spontaneously according to Nature, its knowledge and will are hers and incapable, whether conscient or sub-conscient, of variation from her laws and dictates. Man seems, on the contrary, to possess a power of turning his mind and will upon Nature and a possibility of governing her movement, even of varying from the course she dictates to him. But here there is really a deformative trick of language. For man's mentality is also a part of Nature; his mentality is even the most important, if not the largest part of his nature. It is, we may say, Nature become partly conscious of her own laws and forces, conscious of her struggle of progression and inspired with the conscious will to impose a higher and higher law on her own processes of life and being. In subhuman life there is a vital and physical struggle, but no mental conflict. Man is subjected to this mental conflict and is therefore at war not only with others but with himself; and because he is capable of this war with himself, he is also capable of that which is denied to the animal, of an inner evolution, a progression from higher to higher type, a constant self-transcending.

This evolution takes place at present by a conflict and progress of ideas applied to life. In their primary aspect human ideas of life are simply a mental translation of the forces and tendencies of life itself as they emerge in the form of needs, desires and interests. The human mind has a practical intelligence more or less clear and

exact which takes these things into account and gives to one and another a greater or less value according to its own experience, preference and judgment. Some the man accepts as helps in the growth by his will and intelligence, others he rejects, discourages and even succeeds in eliminating. But from this elementary process there emerges a second and more advanced character of man's ideas about life; he passes beyond the mere mental translation and ready dynamic handling to a regulated valuation of the forces and tendencies that have emerged or are emerging in him and his environment. He studies them as fixed processes and rules of Nature and endeavours to understand their law and norm. He tries to determine the laws of his mind and life and body, the law and rule of the facts and forces about him that constitute his environment and determine the field and the mould of his action. Since we are imperfect and evolutionary beings, this study of the laws of life is bound to envisage two aspects: it perceives the rule of what is and the rule of what may or ought to be, the law of our actualities and the law of our potentialities. The latter takes for the human intellect which tends always to an arbitrary and emphatic statement of things, the form of a fixed ideal standard or set of principles from which our actual life is a fall and deviation or towards which it is a progress and aspiration.

The evolutionary idea of Nature and life brings us to a profounder view. Both what is and what may be are expressions of the same constant facts of existence and forces or powers of our Nature from which we cannot and are not meant to escape, since all life is Nature fulfilling itself and not Nature destroying or denying itself; but we may raise and we are intended to raise,

change and widen the forms, arrangements and values of these constant facts and forces of our nature and existence, and in the course of our progress the change and perfecting may amount to what seems a radical transformation, although nothing essential is altered. Our actualities are the form and value or power of expression to which our nature and life have attained; their norm or law is the fixed arrangement and process proper to that stage of evolution. Our potentialities point us to a new form, value, power of expression with their new and appropriate arrangement and process which is their proper law and norm. Standing thus between the actual and the possible, our intellect tends to mistake present law and form for the eternal law of our nature and existence and regard any change as a deviation and fall or else, on the contrary, to mistake some future and potential law and form for our ideal rule of life and all actual deviation from that as an error or sin of our nature. In reality, only that is eternal which is constant through all changes and our ideal can be no more than a progressive expression of it. Only the utmost limit of height, wideness and fullness of self-expression possible to man, if any such limit there be, could be regarded, did we know of it,—and as yet we do not know our utmost possibilities,—as the eternal ideal.

Whatever the ideas or ideals which the human mind extracts from life or tries to apply to life, they can be nothing but the expression of that life itself as it attempts to find more and more and fix higher and higher its own law and realise its potentialities. Our mentality represents the conscious part of the movement of Nature in this progressive self-realisation and self-fulfilment of

the values and potentialities of her human way of living. If that mentality were perfect, it would be one in its knowledge and will with the totality of the secret Knowledge and Will which she is trying to bring to the surface and there would be no mental conflict. For we should then be able to identify ourself with her movement, know her aim and follow intelligently her course,—realising the truth on which the Gita lays stress that it is Nature alone that acts and the movements of our mind and life are only the action of her modes. The subhuman life vitally, instinctively and mechanically does this very thing, lives according to Nature within the limits of its type and is free from internal conflict though not from conflict with other life. A superhuman life would reach consciously this perfection, make the secret Knowledge and Will in things its own and fulfil itself through Nature by her free, spontaneous and harmonious movement unhasting, unresting, towards that full development which is her inherent and therefore her predestined aim. Actually, because our mentality is imperfect, we catch only a glimpse of her tendencies and objects and each glimpse we get we erect into an absolute principle or ideal theory of our life and conduct; we see only one side of her process and put that forward as the whole and perfect system which must govern our ordering of our life. Working through the imperfect individual and still more imperfect collective mind, she raises up the facts and powers of our existence as opposing principles and forces to which we attach ourselves through our intellect and emotions, and favouring and depressing now this and now another she leads them in the mind of man through struggle and conflict towards a mutual knowledge and the sense of their mutual

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

necessity and towards a progressively right relation and synthesis of their potentialities which is represented in an increasing harmony and combination of realised powers in the elastic potentiality of human life.

The social evolution of the human race is necessarily a development of the relations between three constant factors, individuals, communities of various sorts and mankind. Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction, but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others. The first natural aim of the individual must be his own inner growth and fullness and its expression in his outer life; but this he can only accomplish through his relations with other individuals, to the various kinds of community religious, social, cultural and political to which he belongs and to the idea and need of humanity at large. The community must seek its own fulfilment, but whatever its strength of mass consciousness and collective organisation, can accomplish its growth only through its individuals under the stress of the circumstances set forth by its environment and subject to the conditions imposed by its relations to other communities and individuals and to humanity at large. Mankind as a whole has at present no consciously organised common life; it has only an inchoate organisation determined much more by circumstances than by human intelligence and will. And yet the idea and the fact of our common human existence, nature, destiny has always exercised its strong influence on human thought and action. One of the chief preoccupations of ethics and religion has been the obligations of man to mankind. The pressure of the large movements and fluctuations of the race has always affected the destinies of its separate communities and there has been a constant

return pressure of separate communities social, cultural, political, religious to expand and include, if it might be, the totality of the race. And if or when the whole of humanity arrives at an organised common life and seeks a common fulfilment and satisfaction, it can only do it by means of the relation of this whole to its parts and by the aid of the expanding life of individual human beings and of the communities whose progress constitutes the larger terms of the life of the race.

Nature works always through these three terms and none of them can be abolished. She starts from the visible manifestation of the one and the many, from the totality and its constituent units and creates intermediary unities between the two without which there can be no full development either of the totality or of the units. In the life-type itself she creates always the three terms of genus, species and individual. But while in the animal life she is satisfied to separate rigidly and group summarily, in the human she strives, on the contrary, to override the divisions she has made and lead the whole kind to the sense of unity and the realisation of oneness. Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature,—diversity in unity. Therefore it would seem that the ideal or ultimate aim of Nature must be to develop the individual and all individuals to their full

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

capacity, to develop the community and all communities to the full expression of that many-sided existence and potentiality which their differences were created to express, and to evolve the united life of mankind to its full common capacity and satisfaction, not by suppression of the fullness of life of the individual or the smaller commonalty, but by full advantage taken of the diversity which they develop. This would seem the soundest way to increase the total riches of mankind and throw them into a fund of common possession and enjoyment.

The united progress of mankind would thus be realised by a general principle of interchange and assimilation between individual and individual and again between individual and community, between community and community and again between the smaller commonalty and the totality of mankind, between the common life and consciousness of mankind and its freely developing communal and individual constituents. As a matter of fact, although this interchange is what Nature even now contrives to bring about to a certain extent, life is far from being governed by such a principle of free and harmonious mutuality. There is a struggle, an opposition of ideas, impulses and interests, an attempt of each to profit by various kinds of war on the others, by a kind of intellectual, vital, physical robbery and theft or even by the suppression, devouring, digestion of its fellows rather than by a free and rich interchange. This is the aspect of life which humanity in its highest thought and aspiration knows that it has to transcend, but has either not yet discovered the right means or else has not had the force to apply it. It now endeavours instead to get rid of strife and the disorders of growth by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the individual to the

NATURE'S LAW IN OUR PROGRESS

life of the community and, logically, it will be led to the attempt to get rid of strife between communities by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the community to the united and organised life of the human race. To remove freedom in order to get rid of disorder, strife and waste, to remove diversity in order to get rid of separatism and jarring complexities is the impulse of order and regimentation by which the arbitrary rigidity of the intellectual reason seeks to substitute its straight line for the difficult curves of the process of Nature.

But freedom is as necessary to life as law and regime; diversity is as necessary as unity to our true completeness. Existence is only one in its essence and totality, in its play it is necessarily multiform. Absolute uniformity would mean the cessation of life, while on the other hand, the vigour of the pulse of life may be measured by the richness of the diversities which it creates. At the same time, while diversity is essential for power and fruitfulness of life, unity is necessary for its order, arrangement and stability. Unity we must create, but not necessarily uniformity. If man could realise a perfect spiritual unity, no sort of uniformity would be necessary; for the utmost play of diversity would be securely possible on that foundation. If again he could realise a secure, clear, firmly-held unity in the principle, a rich, even an unlimited diversity in its application might be possible without any fear of disorder, confusion or strife. Because he cannot do either of these things he is tempted always to substitute uniformity for real unity. While the life-power in man demands diversity, his reason favours uniformity. It prefers it because uniformity gives him a strong and ready illusion of unity in place of the real oneness at which it is so much more difficult to arrive.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

It prefers it, secondly, because uniformity makes easy for him the otherwise difficult business of law, order and regimentation. It prefers it too because the impulse of the mind in man is to make every considerable diversity an excuse for strife and separation and therefore uniformity seems to him the one secure and easy way to unification. Moreover, uniformity in any one direction or department of life helps him to economise his energies for development in other directions. If he can standardise his economic existence and escape from its problems, he is likely to have more leisure and room to attend to his intellectual and cultural growth. Or again, if he standardises his whole social existence and rejects its farther possible problems, he is likely to have peace and a free mind to attend more energetically to his spiritual development. Even here, however, the complex unity of existence asserts its truth: in the end man's total intellectual and cultural growth suffers by social immobility,—by any restriction or poverty of his economic life; the spiritual existence of the race, if it attains to remote heights, weakens at last in its richness and continued sources of vivacity when it depends on a too standardised and regimented society; inertia from below rises and touches even the summits.

Owing to the defects of our mentality uniformity has to a certain extent to be admitted and sought after; still the real aim of Nature is a true unity supporting a rich diversity. Her secret is clear enough from the fact that though she moulds on one general plan, she insists always on an infinite variation. The plan of the human form is one, yet no two human beings are precisely alike in their physical characteristics. Human nature is one in its constituents and its grand lines, but no two human beings are precisely alike in their temperament, characteristics

and psychological substance. All life is one in its essential plan and principle; even the plant is a recognisable brother of the animal, but the unity of life admits and encourages an infinite variety of types. The natural variation of human communities from each other proceeds on the same plan as the variation of individuals; each develops its own character, variant principle, natural law. This variation and fundamental following of its own separate law is necessary to its life, but it is equally necessary to the healthy total life of mankind. For the principle of variation does not prevent free interchange, does not oppose the enrichment of all from a common stock and of the common stock by all which we have seen to be the ideal principle of existence; on the contrary, without a secure variation such interchange and mutual assimilation would be out of the question. Therefore we see that in this harmony between our unity and our diversity lies the secret of life; Nature insists equally in all her works upon unity and upon variation. We shall find that a real spiritual and psychological unity can allow a free diversity and dispense with all but the minimum of uniformity which is sufficient to embody the community of nature and of essential principle. Until we can arrive at that perfection, the method of uniformity has to be applied, but we must not over-apply it on peril of discouraging life in the very sources of its power, richness and sane natural self-unfolding.

The quarrel between law and liberty stands on the same ground and moves to the same solution. The diversity, the variation must be a free variation. Nature does not manufacture, does not impose a pattern or a rule from outside; she impels life to grow from within and to assert its own natural law and development modified only by its commerce with its environment.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

All liberty, individual, national, religious, social, ethical, takes its ground upon this fundamental principle of our existence. By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being, to grow to our natural self-fulfilment, to find out naturally and freely our harmony with our environment. The dangers and disadvantages of liberty, the disorder, strife, waste and confusion to which its wrong use leads are indeed obvious. But they arise from the absence or defect of the sense of unity between individual and individual, between community and community, which pushes them to assert themselves at the expense of each other instead of growing by mutual help and interchange and to assert freedom for themselves in the very act of encroaching on the free development of their fellows. If a real, a spiritual and psychological unity were effectuated, liberty would have no perils and disadvantages; for free individuals enamoured of unity would be compelled by themselves, by their own need, to accommodate perfectly their own growth with the growth of their fellows and would not feel themselves complete except in the free growth of others. Because of our present imperfection and the ignorance of our mind and will, law and regimentation have to be called in to restrain and to compel from outside. The facile advantages of a strong law and compulsion are obvious, but equally great are the disadvantages. Such perfection as it succeeds in creating tends to be mechanical and even the order it imposes turns out to be artificial and liable to break down if the yoke is loosened or the restraining grasp withdrawn. Carried too far, an imposed order discourages the principle of natural growth which is the true method of life and may even slay the capacity for real growth. We repress and overstandardise life

NATURE'S LAW IN OUR PROGRESS

at our peril; by overregimentation we crush Nature's initiative and habit of intuitive self-adaptation. Dwarfed or robbed of elasticity, the devitalised individuality, even while it seems outwardly fair and symmetrical, perishes from within. Better anarchy than the long continuance of a law which is not our own or which our real nature cannot assimilate. And all repressive or preventive law is only a makeshift, a substitute for the true law which must develop from within and be not a check on liberty, but its outward image and visible expression. Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE IDEAL SOLUTION—A FREE GROUPING OF MANKIND

THESE principles founded on the essential and constant tendencies of Nature in the development of human life ought clearly to be the governing ideas in any intelligent attempt at the unification of the human race. And it might so be done if that unification could be realised after the manner of a Lycurgan constitution or by the law of an ideal Manu, the perfect sage and king. Attempted, as it will be, in very different fashion according to the desires, passions and interests of great masses of man and guided by no better light than the half-enlightened reason of the world's intellectuals and the empirical opportunism of the world's statesmen and politicians, it is likely to be done by a succession of confused experiments, recoils and returns, resistances and persistences; it will progress in spite of human unreason in the midst of a clamour of rival ideas and interests, stumble through a war of principles, advance by a clash of vehement parties ending in more or less clumsy compromises. It may even, as we have said, be managed in the most unideal, though not the most inconvenient method of all, by a certain amount of violence, the domination of a few vast and powerful empires or even the emergence of a single predominant World-Empire, a King-State that will be accepted or will

THE IDEAL SOLUTION—A FREE GROUPING OF MANKIND

impose itself as the arbiter if not the ruler of mankind. Not any intelligent principle, but necessity and convenience, not urgent light, but urgent power is likely to be the effective force in any political, administrative and economic unification of the race.

Still, though the ideal may not be immediately practicable, it is that to which our action ought more and more to move. And if the best method cannot always be employed, it is well to know the best method, so that in the strife of principles and forces and interests something of it may enter into our dealings with each other and mitigate the errors, stumblings and sufferings which our ignorance and unreason compel us to pay as the price of our progress. In principle, then, the ideal unification of mankind would be a system in which, as a first rule of common and harmonious life, the human peoples would be allowed to form their own groupings according to their natural divisions of locality, race, culture, economic convenience and not according to the more violent accidents of history or the egoistic will of powerful nations whose policy it must always be to compel the smaller or less timely organised to serve their interests as dependants or obey their commands as subjects. The present arrangement of the world has been worked out by economic forces, by political diplomacies, treaties and purchases and by military violence without regard to any moral principle or any general rule of the good of mankind. It has served roughly certain ends of the World-Force in its development and helped at much cost of bloodshed, suffering, cruelty, oppression and revolt to bring humanity more together. Like all things that, though in themselves unideal, have been and have asserted themselves with force, it has

had its justification, not moral but biological, in the necessity of the rough methods which Nature has to use with a half-animal mankind as with her animal creation. But the great step of unification once taken, the artificial arrangements which have resulted would no longer have any reason for existence. It would be so in the first place because the convenience and good of the world at large and not the satisfaction of the egoism, pride and greed of particular nations, would be the object to be held in view, in the second because whatever legitimate claim any nation might have upon others, such as necessities of economic well-being and expansion, would be arranged for in a soundly organised world-union or world-state no longer on the principle of strife and competition, but on a principle of co-operation or mutual adjustment or at least of competition regulated by law and equity and just interchange. Therefore no ground would remain for forced and artificial groupings except that of historical tradition or accomplished fact which would obviously have little weight in a great change of world conditions impossible to achieve unless the race is prepared to break hundreds of traditions and unsettle the great majority of accomplished facts.

The first principle of human unity, groupings being necessary, should be a system of free and natural groupings which would leave no room for internal discords, incompatibilities and repression and revolt as between race and race or people and people. For otherwise the World-State would be founded in part at least upon a system of legalised injustice and repression or at the best upon a principle of force and compulsion, however mitigated. Such a system would contain dissatisfied

elements eager to seize upon any hope of change and throw their moral force and whatever material power they might still keep on the side of any velleities that might appear in the race towards disorder, secession, dissolution of the system and perhaps a return to the old order of things. Moral centres of revolt would thus be preserved which, given the restlessness of the human mind, could not fail to have, in periods favourable to them, a great power of contagion and self-diffusion. In fact, any system which would appear to stereotype anomalies, eternise injustice and inequality or rest permanently on a principle of compulsion and forced subjection, could have no security and would be condemned by its very nature to transience.

This was the principal weakness of the drift during the war towards the settlement of the world on the basis of the actual *status quo* that followed the recent world convulsion. Such a settlement must have had the vice of fixing conditions which in their nature must be transient. It would mean not only the rule of this or that nation over dissatisfied foreign minorities but the supremacy of Europe over most of Asia and all Africa. A league of incipient unity of the nations would be equivalent under such conditions to the control of the enormous mass of mankind by an oligarchy of a few white races. Such could not be the principle of a long-enduring settlement of the world. For then one of two alternatives would be inevitable. A new system would have to support by law and force the existing conditions of things and resist any attempt at radical change; but this would lead to an unnatural suppression of great natural and moral forces and in the end a tremendous disorder, perhaps a world-shattering explosion. Or else

some general legislative authority and means of change would have to be established by which the judgment and sentiment of mankind would be able to prevail over imperialistic egoisms and which would enable the European, Asiatic and African peoples now subject to make the claims of their growing self-consciousness felt in the councils of the world.¹ But such an authority, interfering with the egoisms of great and powerful empires, would be difficult to establish, slow to act and not by any means at ease in its exercise of power or moral influence or likely to be peaceful or harmonious in its deliberations. It would either reduce itself to a representative of the sentiments and interests of a ruling oligarchy of great Powers or end in such movements of secession and civil war between the States as settled the question of slavery in America. There would be only one other possible issue,—that the liberal sentiments and principles at first aroused by the war in Europe should become settled and permanent forces of action and extend themselves to the dealings of European nations with their non-European dependencies. In other words, it must become a settled political principle with European nations to change the character of their imperialism and convert their empires as soon as might be from artificial into true psychological unities.

¹ The League of Nations started with some dim ideal of this kind; but even its first halting attempts at opposing imperial egoisms ended in secession and avoided a civil war among its members only by drawing back from its own commitments. In fact, it was never more than an instrument subservient to the policy of a few great Powers.

But that would end inevitably in the recognition of the principle we have advanced, the arrangement of the world in a system of free and natural and not as hitherto of partly free and partly forced groupings. For a psychological unity could only be assured by a free assent of nations now subject to their inclusion in the imperial aggregate and the power of free assent would imply a power of free dissent and separation. If owing to incompatibility of culture, temperament or economic or other interest the psychological unity could not be established, either such separation would be inevitable or else there must be a resort to the old principle of force, a difficult matter when dealing with great masses of men who must in the course of the new process have arrived at self-consciousness and recovered their united intellectual force and vitality. Imperial unities of this kind must be admitted as a possible, but by no means an inevitable next step in human aggregation easier to realise than a united mankind in present conditions; but such unities could have only two rational purposes, one as a half-way house to the unity of all the nations of the world and an experiment in administrative and economic confederation on a large scale, the other as a means of habituating nations of different race, traditions, colour, civilisation to dwell together in a common political family as the whole human race would have to dwell in any scheme of unity which respected the principle of variation and did not compel a dead level of uniformity. The imperial heterogeneous unit has a value in Nature's processes only as a means towards this greater unity and, where not maintained afterwards by some natural attraction or by some miracle of entire fusion,—a thing improbable, if possible,—would cease to exist once the greater

unity was accomplished. On this line of development also and indeed on any line of development the principle of a free and natural grouping of peoples must be the eventual conclusion, the final and perfect basis. It must be so, because on no other foundation could the unification of mankind be secure or sound. And it must be so, because once unification is firmly accomplished and war and jealous national competition replaced by better methods of intercourse and mutual adjustment, there can be no object in maintaining any other more artificial system, and therefore both reason and convenience would compel the change. The institution of a natural system of grouping would become as much a matter of course as the administrative arrangement of a country according to its natural provinces. And it would be as much a necessity of reason or convenience as the regard necessarily paid in any system of devolution or free federation to race or national sentiment or long-established local unities. Other considerations might modify the application of the principle, but there would be none that could be strong enough to abrogate it.

The natural unit in such a grouping is the nation, because that is the basis natural evolution has firmly created and seems indeed to have provided with a view to the greater unity. Unless, therefore, unification is put off to a much later date of our history and in the meanwhile the national principle of aggregation loses its force and vitality and is dissolved in some other, the free and natural nation-unit and perhaps the nation-group would be the just and living support of a sound and harmonious world-system. Race still counts and would enter in as an element, but only as a subordinate element. In certain groupings it would predominate and be decisive;

in others it would be set at nought partly by a historic and national sentiment overriding differences of language and race, partly by economic and other relations created by local contact or geographical oneness. Cultural unity would count, but need not in all cases prevail; even the united force of race and culture might not be sufficiently strong to be decisive.

The examples of this complexity are everywhere. Switzerland belongs by language, race and culture and even by affinities of sentiment to different national aggregations, two of sentiment and culture, the Latin and the Teutonic, three of race and language, the German, French and Italian, and these differences worked sufficiently to bewilder and divide Swiss sympathies in the clash of nations; but the decisive feeling overriding all others is the sentiment of Helvetian nationality and that would seem to forbid now and always any idea of a voluntary partition or dissolution of Switzerland's long-standing natural, local and historic unity. Alsace belongs predominantly by race, language and early history to a Germanic union, but the German appealed in vain to these titles and laboured in vain to change Alsace-Lorraine into Elsass-Lothringen; the living sentiments and affinities of the people, national, historical, cultural, bound it still to France. Canada and Australia have no geographical connection with the British Isles or with each other and the former would seem to belong by predestination to an American group-unity; but certainly, in the absence of a change of sentiment not now easily foreseen, both would prefer to belong to a British grouping rather than the one fuse itself into an increasingly cosmopolitan American nation or the other stand apart as an Australasian union. On the other hand, the Slavonic and

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

Latin elements of Austro-Hungary, though they belonged by history, geographical position and economic convenience to that empire, moved strongly towards separation and, where local sentiments permitted, to union with their racial, cultural and linguistic kin. If Austria had dealt with her Slav subjects as with the Magyars or had been able to build a national culture of her own out of her German, Slav, Magyar and Italian elements, it would have been otherwise and her unity would have been secure against all external forces of disruption. Race, language, local relations and economic convenience are powerful factors, but what decides must be a dominant psychological element that makes for union. To that subtler force all others, however restless they may be, must succumb; however much they may seek for free particularist expression and self-possession within a larger unity, they must needs subordinate themselves to the more powerful attraction.

For this very reason the basic principle adopted must be a free grouping and not that of some abstract or practical rule or principle of historic tradition or actual status imposed upon the nations. It is easy to build up a system in the mind and propose to erect it on foundations which would be at first sight rational and convenient. At first sight it would seem that the unity of mankind could most rationally and conveniently arrange itself upon the basis of a European grouping, an Asiatic grouping, an American grouping, with two or three sub-groups in America, Latin and English-speaking, three in Asia, the Mongolian, Indian and West-Asian, with Moslem North Africa perhaps as a natural annexe to the third of these, four in Europe, the Latin, Slavonic, Teutonic and Anglo-Celtic, the latter with the colonies that still

chose to adhere to it, while Central and Southern Africa might be left to develop under present conditions but with the more humane and progressive principles upon which the sentiment of a united humanity would insist. Certain of the actual and obvious difficulties might not be of great importance under a better system of things. We know, for instance, that nations closely connected by every apparent tie, are actually divided by stronger antipathies than those more ideative and less actual which separate them from peoples who have with them no tie of affinity. Mongolian Japan and Mongolian China are sharply divided from each other in sentiment; Arab and Turk and Persian, although one in Islamic religion and culture, would not, if their present sentiments towards each other persisted, make an entirely happy family. Scandinavian Norway and Sweden had everything to draw them together and perpetuate their union,—except a strong, if irrational sentiment which made the continuance of that union impossible. But these antipathies really persist only so long as there is some actual unfriendly pressure or sense of subjugation or domination or fear of the oppression of the individuality of one by the other; once that is removed they would be likely to disappear. It is notable, for instance, that, since the separation of Norway and Sweden, the three Scandinavian States have been increasingly disposed to act together and regard themselves as a natural grouping in Europe. It is easily conceivable therefore that with a system in which the causes of hostility would disappear, natural affinities would prevail and a grouping of the kind imagined might become more easily practicable. It is arguable also that the trend of mankind under a great stress of tendency towards unification would naturally

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

move to the creation of such a symmetry. It may be that a great change and revolution in the world would powerfully and rapidly abolish all the obstacles, as the obstacles of the old regime to a uniform democratic system were abolished in France by the French Revolution. But any such arrangement would be quite impracticable unless and until the actual sentiments of the peoples corresponded with these systems of rational convenience: the state of the world is at present far removed from any such ideal correspondence.

The idea of a new basis founded on the principle of national sentiment seemed at one time to be taking within a limited field the shape of a practical proposition. It was confined to a European resettlement and even there it was only to be imposed by the logic of war and force upon defeated empires. The others proposed to recognise it for themselves only in a restricted form, Russia by the concession of autonomy to Poland, England by Home Rule in Ireland and a federation with her colonies, while other denials of the principle were still to persist and even perhaps one or two new denials of it to be established in obedience to imperial ambitions and exigencies. A name even was given to this new principle and for a time the idea of self-determination received an official sanction and almost figured as a gospel. However imperfect the application, this practical enforcement of it, if effected, would have meant the physical birth and infancy of a new ideal and would have held forth to the hopes of mankind the prospect of its eventual application in a larger field until it came to be universalised. Even if the victory of the Allies put an end to these high professions, it is no longer possible to consider this ideal of a rearrangement of the world on the basis of

free national groupings as an impossible dream, an altogether chimerical ideal.

Still, the forces against it are considerable and it is idle to hope that they will be overcome except after long and difficult struggles. National and imperial egoism is the first and most powerful of the contrary forces. To give up the instinct of domination and the desire still to be rulers and supreme where rule and supremacy have been the reward of past efforts, to sacrifice the advantages of a commercial exploitation of dependencies and colonies which can only be assured by the confirmation of dominance and supremacy, to face disinterestedly the emergence into free national activity of vigorous and sometimes enormous masses of men, once subjects and passive means of self-enrichment but henceforth to be powerful equals and perhaps formidable rivals, is too great a demand upon egoistic human nature to be easily and spontaneously conceded where concession is not forced upon the mind by actual necessity or the hope of some great and palpable gain that will compensate the immediate and visible loss. There is, too, the claim of Europe, not yet renounced, to hold the rest of the world in the interests of civilisation, by which is meant European civilisation, and to insist upon its acceptance as a condition for the admission of Asiatic races to any kind of equality or freedom. This claim which is destined soon to lose all its force in Asia, has still a strong justification in the actual state of the African continent. For the present let us note that it works strongly against a wider recognition of the new-born ideal and that until the problems it raises are resolved, the settlement of the world on any such ideal principle must wait upon the evolution of new forces and

the coming to a head both in Asia and Europe of yet unaccomplished spiritual, intellectual and material revolutions.¹

¹ These revolutions have now happened and these obstacles, though not yet entirely, have faded or are fading out of existence.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DRIVE TOWARDS CENTRALISATION AND UNIFORMITY. ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUPPOSING the free grouping of the nations according to their natural affinities, sentiments, sense of economic and other convenience to be the final basis of a stable world-union, the next question that arises is what precisely would be the status of these nation-units in the larger and more complex unity of mankind. Would they possess only a nominal separateness and become parts of a machine or retain a real and living individuality and an effective freedom and organic life? Practically, this comes to the question whether the ideal of human unity points to the forcible or at least forceful fusing and welding of mankind into a single vast nation and centralised World-State with many provinces or to its aggregation under a more complex, loose and flexible system into a world-union of free nationalities. If the former more rigorous idea or tendency or need dominated, we must have a period of compression, constriction, negation of national and individual liberties as in the second of the three historical stages of national formation in Europe. This process would end, if entirely successful, in a centralised world-government which would impose its uniform rule and law, uniform administration, uniform economic and educational system, one culture, one

social principle, one civilisation, perhaps even one language and one religion on all mankind. Centralised, it would delegate some of its powers to national authorities and councils, but only as the centralised French government—Parliament and bureaucracy—delegate some of their powers to the departmental prefects and councils and their subordinate officials and communes.

Such a state of things seems a sufficiently far-off dream and assuredly not, except to the rigid doctrinaire, a very beautiful dream. Certainly, it would take a long time to become entirely practicable and would have to be preceded by a period of loose formation corresponding to the feudal unity of France or Germany in mediaeval Europe. Still, at the rate of ever accelerated speed with which the world is beginning to progress and with the gigantic revolutions of international thought, outlook and practice which the future promises, we have to envisage it as not only an ultimate, but it may very well be a not immeasurably far-off possibility. If things continued to move persistently, victoriously in one direction and Science still farther to annihilate the obstacles of space and of geographical and mental division which yet exist and to aggrandise its means and powers of vast and close organisation, it might well become feasible within a century or two, at the most even three or four. It would be the logical conclusion of any process in which force and constraint or the predominance of a few great nations or the emergence of a king-state, an empire predominant on sea and land, became the principal instrument of unification. It might come about, supposing some looser unity to be already established, by the triumph throughout the world of the political doctrine and the coming to political power of a party of socialistic and

internationalistic doctrinaires alike in mentality to the unitarian Jacobins of the French Revolution who would have no tenderness for the sentiments of the past or for any form of group individualism and would seek to crush out of existence all their visible supports so as to establish perfectly their idea of an absolute human equality and unity.

A system of the kind, however established, by whatever forces, governed by the democratic State idea which inspires modern socialism or by the mere State idea socialistic perhaps, but undemocratic or anti-democratic, would stand upon the principle that perfect unity is only to be realised by uniformity. All thought in fact that seeks to establish unity by mechanical or external means is naturally attracted towards uniformity. Its thesis would seem to be supported by history and the lessons of the past; for in the formation of national unity, the trend to centralisation and uniformity has been the decisive factor, a condition of uniformity the culminating point. The precedent of the formation of diverse and often conflicting elements of a people into a single national State would naturally be the determining precedent for the formation of the populations of the earth, the human people, into a single world-nation and World-State. In modern times there have been significant examples of the power of this trend towards uniformity which increases as civilisation progresses. The Turkish movement began with the ideal of toleration for all the heterogeneous elements—races, languages, religions, cultures—of the ramshackle Turkish empire, but inevitably the dominant young Turk element was carried away by the instinct for establishing, even by coercion, a uniform Ottoman culture and Ottoman nationality. This trend has found

its completion, after the elimination of the Greek element and the loss of the empire, in the small purely Turkish State of today, but curiously the national uniformity has been topped by the association with it and assimilation of European culture and social forms and habits. Belgium, composed almost equally of Teutonic Flemings and Gallic Walloons, grew into a nationality under the aegis of a Franco-Belgian culture with French as the dominant language; the Fleming movement which should logically have contented itself with equal rights for the two languages, aimed really at a reversal of the whole position and not merely the assertion but the dominance of the Flemish language and an indigenous Flemish culture. Germany, uniting her ancient elements into one body, suffered her existing States with their governments and administrations to continue, but the possibility of considerable diversities thus left open was annulled by the centralisation of national life in Berlin; a nominal separateness existed, but overshadowed by a real and dominant uniformity which all but converted Germany into the image of a larger Prussia in spite of the more democratic and humanistic tendencies and institutions of the Southern States. There are indeed apparent types of a freer kind of federation, Switzerland, the United States, Australia, South Africa, but even here the spirit of uniformity really prevails or tends to prevail in spite of variation in detail and the latitude of free legislation in minor matters conceded to the component States. Everywhere unity seems to call for and strive to create a greater or less uniformity as its secure basis.

The first uniformity from which all the rest takes its start is that of a centralised government whose natural

function is to create and ensure a uniform administration. A central government is necessary to every aggregate which seeks to arrive at an organic unity of its political and organic life. Although nominally or to begin with this central government may be only an organ created by several States that still claim to be sovereign within their own borders, an instrument to which for convenience' sake they attribute a few of their powers for common objects, yet in fact it tends always to become itself the sovereign body and desires always to concentrate more and more power into its hands and leave only delegated powers to local legislatures and authorities. The practical inconveniences of a looser system strengthen this tendency and weaken gradually the force of the safeguards erected against an encroachment which seems more and more to be entirely beneficial and supported by the logic of general utility. Even in the United States with its strong attachment to its original constitution and slowness in accepting constitutional innovations on other than local lines, the tendency is manifesting itself and would certainly have resulted by this time in great and radical changes if there had not been a supreme Court missioned to nullify any legislative interference with the original constitution, or if the American policy of aloofness from foreign affairs and complications had not removed the pressure of those necessities that in other nations have aided the central government to engross all real power and convert itself into the source as well as the head or centre of national activities. The traditional policy of the United States, its pacificism, its anti-militarism, its aversion to entanglement in European complications or any close touch with the politics of Europe, its jealousy of interference by the

European Powers in American affairs in spite of their possession of colonies and interests in the Western hemisphere, are largely due to the instinct that this separateness is the sole security for the maintenance of its institutions and the peculiar type of its national life. Once militarised, once cast into the vortex of old-world politics, as it at times threatens to be, nothing could long protect the States from the necessity of large changes in the direction of centralisation and the weakening of the federal principle.¹ Switzerland owes the security of its federal constitution to a similarly self-centred neutrality.

For the growth of national centralisation is due to two primary needs of which the first and most pressing is the necessity of compactness, single-mindedness, a single and concentrated action against other nations, whether for defence against external aggression or for aggression upon others in the pursuit of national interests and ambitions. The centralising effect of war and militarism, its call for a concentration of powers, has been a commonplace of history from the earliest times. It has been the chief factor in the evolution of centralised and absolute monarchies, in the maintenance of close and powerful aristocracies, in the welding together of disparate elements and the discouragement of centrifugal tendencies. The nations which, faced with this necessity, have failed to evolve or to preserve this concentration of powers, have always tended to fare ill in the battle of life, even if they have not shared the fate long

¹ The Roosevelt policy and the difficulties it encountered illustrate vividly the power of these two conflicting forces in the United States; and the trend towards the strengthening of the federal case, however slow, is unmistakable.

endured by Italy and Poland in Europe or by India in Asia. The strength of centralised Japan, the weakness of decentralised China was a standing proof that even in modern conditions the ancient rule holds good. Only yesterday the free States of Western Europe found themselves compelled to suspend all their hard-earned liberties and go back to the ancient Roman device of an irresponsible Senate and even to a covert dictatorship in order to meet the concentrated strength of a nation powerfully centralised and organised for military defence and attack. If the sense of this necessity could covertly or overtly survive the actual duration of war, there can be no doubt that democracy and liberty would receive the most dangerous and possibly fatal blow they have yet suffered since their re-establishment in modern times.¹

The power of Prussia to take the life of Germany into its grasp was due almost wholly to the sense of an insecure position between two great and hostile nations and to the feeling of encirclement and insecurity for its expansion which was imposed on the Reich by its peculiar placement in Europe. Another example of the same tendency was the strength which the idea of confederation acquired as a result of war in England and her colonies. So long as the colonies could stand aloof and unaffected by England's wars and foreign policy, this idea had little chance of effectuation; but the experience of the war and its embarrassments and the patent inability to compel a concentration of all the

¹ Even as it is, the direction of the drive of forces tends to be evidently away from democracy towards a more and more rigid State control and regimentation.

potential strength of the empire under a system of almost total decentralisation seem to have made inevitable a tightening up of the loose and easy make of the British Empire which may go very far once the principle has been recognised and put initially into practice.¹ A loose federation in one form or another serves well where peace is the rule; wherever peace is insecure or the struggle of life difficult and menacing, looseness becomes a disadvantage and may turn even into a fatal defect, the opportunity of fate for destruction.

The pressure of peril from without and the need of expansion create only the tendency towards a strong political and military centralisation; the growth of uniformity arises from the need of a close internal organisation of which the centre thus created becomes the instrument. This organisation is partly called for by the same needs as create the instrument, but much more by the advantages of uniformity for a well-ordered social and economic life based upon a convenience of which life is careless, but which the intelligence of man constantly demands,—a clear, simple and as far as the complexity of life will allow, a facile principle of order. The human intelligence as soon as it begins to order

¹ As yet this has only gone so far as equality of status with close consultation in foreign affairs, attempts at a closer economic co-operation, but a continuation of large wars might either according to its fortunes dissolve the still loose or compel a more coherent system. At present, however, this possibility is held back by the arrival of true Dominion Status and the Westminster Statute which make federation unnecessary for any practical purpose and even perhaps undesirable for the sentiment in favour of a practical independence.

life according to its own fashion and not according to the more instinctively supple and flexible principle of organic order inherent in life, aims necessarily at imitating physical Nature in the fixity of her uniform fundamental principles of arrangement, but tries also to give to them, as much as may be, a uniform application. It drives at the suppression of all important variations. It is only when it has enlarged itself and feels more competent to understand and deal with natural complexities that it finds itself at all at ease in managing what the principle of life seems always to demand, the free variation and subtly diverse application of uniform principles. First of all in the ordering of a national society, it aims naturally at uniformity in that aspect of it which most nearly concerns the particular need of the centre of order which has been called into existence, its political and military function. It aims first at a sufficient and then at an absolute unity and uniformity of administration.

The monarchies which the need of concentration called into being, drove first at a preliminary concentration, a gathering of the main threads of administration into the hands of the central authority. We see this everywhere, but the stages of the process are most clearly indicated in the political history of France; for there the confusion of feudal separatism and feudal jurisdictions created the most formidable difficulties, and yet by a constant centralising insistence and a final violent reaction from their surviving results it was there that they were most successfully resolved and removed. The centralising monarchy, brought to supreme power by the repeated lessons of the English invasions, the Spanish pressure, the civil wars, developed inevitably

that absolutism which the great historic figure of Louis XIV so strikingly personifies. His famous dictum, "I am the State", expressed really the need felt by the country of the development of one undisputed sovereign Power which should concentrate in itself all military, legislative and administrative authority as against the loose and almost chaotic organisation of feudal France. The system of the Bourbons aimed first at administrative centralisation and unity, secondarily at a certain amount of administrative uniformity. It could not carry this second aim to an entirely successful conclusion because of its dependence on the aristocracy which it had replaced, but to which it was obliged to leave the confused debris of its feudal privileges. The Revolution made short work of this aristocracy and swept away the relics of the ancient system. In establishing a rigorous uniformity it did not reverse but rather completed the work of the monarchy. An entire unity and uniformity legislative, fiscal, economic, judicial, social, was the goal towards which French absolutism, monarchical or democratic, was committed by its original impulse. The rule of the Jacobins and the regime of Napoleon only brought rapidly to fruition what was slowly evolving under the monarchy out of the confused organism of feudal France.

In other countries the movement was less direct and the survival of old institutions even after the loss of their original reason for existence more obstinate; but everywhere in Europe, even in Germany¹ and Russia, the

¹ Note the absolute culmination of this drive in Germany, in the unprecedented centralisation, the rigid standardisation and uniformity of the Nationalist Socialist regime under Hitler.

DRIVE TOWARDS CENTRALISATION AND UNIFORMITY

trend has been the same and the eventual result is inevitable. The study of that evolution is of considerable importance for the future; for the difficulties to be surmounted were identical in essence, however different in form and extent to those which would stand in the way of the evolution of a World-State out of the loose and still confused organism of the modern civilised world.

CHAPTER XX

THE DRIVE TOWARDS ECONOMIC CENTRALISATION

THE objective organisation of a national unity is not yet complete when it has arrived at the possession of a single central authority and the unity and uniformity of its political, military and strictly administrative functions. There is another side of its organic life, the legislative and its corollary, the judicial function, which is equally important; the exercise of legislative power becomes eventually indeed, although it was not always, the characteristic sign of the sovereign. Logically, one would suppose that the conscious and organised determination of its own rules of life should be the first business of a society from which all others should derive and on which they should be dependent and therefore it would naturally be the earliest to develop. But life develops in obedience to its own law and the pressure of forces and not according to the law and the logic of the self-conscious mind; its first course is determined by the subconscious and is only secondarily and derivatively self-conscious. The development of human society has been no exception to the rule; for man, though in the essence of his nature a mental being, has practically started with a largely mechanical mentality as the conscious living being, the self-perfecting Manu. That is the course the individual has to follow; the group-man follows in the wake of the individual and

DRIVE TOWARDS ECONOMIC CENTRALISATION

is always far behind the highest individual development. Therefore, the development of the society as an organism consciously and entirely legislating for its own needs, which should be by the logic of reason the first necessary step, is actually in the logic of life the last and culminative step. It enables the society at last to perfect consciously by means of the State the whole organisation of its life, military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural. The completeness of the process depends on the completeness of the development by which the State and society become, as far as that may be, synonymous. That is the importance of democracy; that is the importance also of socialism. They are the sign that the society is getting ready to be an entirely self-conscious and therefore a freely and consciously self-regulating organism.¹ But it must be remarked that modern democracy and modern socialism are only a first crude and bungling attempt at that consummation, an inefficient hint and not a freely intelligent realisation.

At first, in the early stage of society, there is no such thing as what we understand by law, the Roman *lex*; there are only a mass of binding habits, *nomoi*, *mores*, *ācāra*, determined by the inner nature of the group-man and according to the action upon it of the forces and the necessities of his environment. They become *instituta*, things that acquire a fixed and formal status, institutions, and crystallise into laws. Moreover, they embrace the whole life of the society; there is no distinction between the political and administrative, the social and the religious

¹ Fascism, National Socialism have cut out the "freely" in this formula and set about the task of creating the organised self-regulating consciousness by a violent regimentation.

law; these not only all meet in one system, but run inextricably into and are determined by each other. Such was the type of the ancient Jewish law and of the Hindu Shashtra which preserved up to recent times this early principle of society in spite of the tendencies of specialisation and separation which have triumphed elsewhere as a result of the normal development of the analytical and practical reason of mankind. This complex customary law evolved indeed, but by a natural development of the body of social habits in obedience to changing ideas and more and more complex necessities. There was no single and fixed legislative authority to determine them by conscious shaping and selection or in anticipation of popular consent or by direct ideative action upon the general consensus of need and opinion. Kings and prophets and Rishis and Brahmin jurists might exercise such an action according to their power and influence, but none of these were the constituted legislative sovereign; the king in India was the administrator of the Dharma and not at all or only exceptionally and to a hardly noticeable extent the legislator.

It is worth noting, indeed, that this customary law was often attributed to an original legislator, a Manu, Moses, Lycurgus; but the historic truth of any such tradition has been discredited by modern inquiry and perhaps rightly, if we consider only the actual ascertainable facts and the ordinary process of the human mind and its development. In fact, if we examine the profound legendary tradition of India, we see that its idea of the Manu is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution. In the Purana

DRIVE TOWARDS ECONOMIC CENTRALISATION

he or his sons are said to reign in subtle earths or worlds or, as we may say, they reign in the larger mentality which to us is subconscient and from there have power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of man. His law is the *mānava-dharma-śāstra*, the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its Manu has fixed for it. If there comes an embodied Manu, a living Moses or Mahomed, he is only the prophet or spokesman of the Divinity who is veiled in the fire and the cloud, Jehovah on Sinai, Allah speaking through his angels. Mahomed, as we know, only developed the existing social, religious and administrative customs of the Arab people into a new system dictated to him often in a state of trance, in which he passed from his conscient into his superconscient self, by the Divinity to his secret intuitive mind. All that may be suprarational or, if you will, irrational, but it represents a different stage of human development from the government of society by its rational and practical mind which in contact with life's changing needs and permanent necessities demands a created and codified law determined by a fixed legislative authority, the society's organised brain or centre.

This rational development consists, as we have seen, in the creation of a central authority,—at first a distinct central force but afterwards more and more conterminous with the society itself or directly representing it,—which gradually takes over the specialised and separated parts of the social activity. At first, this authority was the king, elective or hereditary, in his original character a war leader and at home only the chief, the head of the elders

or the strong men and the convener of the nation and the army, a nodus of its action, but not the principal determinant: in war only, where entire centralisation of power is the first condition of effective action, was he entirely supreme. As host-leader, *strategos*, he was also imperator, the giver of the absolute command. When he extended this combination of headship and the rule from outside inward, he tended to become the executive power, not merely the chief instrument of social administration but the executive ruler.

It was naturally easier for him to become thus supreme in foreign than in internal politics. Even now European governments which have in internal affairs to defer to the popular will or to persuade and cajole the nation, are able in foreign politics to act either entirely or very largely according to their own ideas: for they are allowed to determine their acts by a secret diplomacy in which the people can have no voice and the representatives of the nation have only a general power of criticising or ratifying its results. Their action in foreign politics is nominal or at any rate restricted to a minimum, since they cannot prevent secret arrangements and treaties; even to such as are made early public they can only withhold their ratification at the risk of destroying the sureness and continuity, the necessary uniformity of the external action of the nation and thus destroying too the confidence of foreign governments without which negotiations cannot be conducted nor stable alliances and combinations formed. Nor can they really withhold their sanction in a crisis, whether for war or peace, at the only moment when they are effectively consulted, the last hour or rather the last minute when either has become inevitable. Much more necessarily was this the case in the old

monarchies when the king was the maker of war and peace and conducted the external affairs of the country according to his personal idea of the national interests, largely affected by his own passions, predilections and personal and family interests. But whatever the attendant disadvantages, the conduct of war and peace and foreign politics as well as the conduct of the host in the field of battle had at least been centralised, unified in the sovereign authority. The demand for real parliamentary control of foreign policy and even for an open diplomacy—a difficult matter to our current notions, yet once practised and perfectly capable of practice—indicates one more step in the transformation, far from complete in spite of the modern boast of democracy, from a monarchical and oligarchic to a democratic system, the taking over of all sovereign functions from the one sovereign administrator or the few dominant executive men by the society as a whole organised in the democratic State.

In its seizure of the internal functionings the central authority has a more difficult task, because its absorption of them or of their chief control has to reckon with powerful competing or modifying forces and interests and the strength of established and often cherished national habits and existing rights and privileges. But it is bound in the end to arrive at some unified control of those which are in their nature executive and administrative. This administrative side of the national organisation has three principal parts, financial, executive proper and official. The financial power carries with it the control of the public purse and the expenditure of the wealth contributed by the society for national purposes, and it is evident that this must pass into the hands of whatever authority has taken up the business of organising

and making efficient the united action of the community. But that authority in its impulse towards an undivided and uncontrolled gestation, a complete unification of powers must naturally desire not only to determine the expenditure according to its own free will, but to determine also the contributions of the society to the public purse both in its amount and in its repartition over the individuals and classes who constitute the nation. Monarchy in its impulse towards a despotic centrality has always sought to engross and struggled to retain this power; for the control over the purse of the nation is the most important sign and the most effective element of real sovereignty, more essential perhaps than the control over life and limb. In the most despotic regimes, this control is absolute and extends to the power of confiscation and despoliation otherwise than by judicial procedure. On the other hand, a ruler who has to bargain with his subjects over the amount of their contribution and the methods of taxation, is at once hedged in in his sovereignty and is not in fact the sole and entire sovereign. A vital power is in the hands of an inferior estate of the realm and can be turned against him fatally in any struggle for the shifting of the sovereignty from him to that estate. That is the reason why the supreme political instinct of the English people fixed, in the struggle with the monarchy, upon this question of taxation as the first vital point in a conflict for the power of the purse. Once that was settled in the Parliament by the defeat of the Stuarts, the transformation of the monarchical sovereignty into the sovereignty of the people or, more accurately, the shifting of the organic control from the throne to the aristocracy, thence to the bourgeoisie, and again to the whole people,—the latter two steps comprising the rapid

evolution of the last eighty years,—was only a question of time. In France, the successful practical absorption of this control was the strength of the monarchy; it was its inability to manage with justice and economy the public purse, its unwillingness to tax the enormous riches of the aristocracy and clergy as against the crushing taxation on the people and the consequent necessity of deferring again to the nation which provided the opportunity for the Revolution. In advanced modern countries we have a controlling authority which claims at least to represent more or less perfectly the whole nation; individuals and classes have to submit because there is no appeal from the will of the whole society. But even so, it is questions, not of taxation, but of the proper organisation and administration of the economic life of the society which are preparing the revolutions of the future.

CHAPTER XXI

THE DRIVE TOWARDS LEGISLATIVE AND SOCIAL CENTRALISATION AND UNIFORMITY

THE gathering of the essential powers of administration into the hands of the sovereign is completed when there is unity and uniformity of judicial administration,—especially of the criminal side; for this is intimately connected with the maintenance of order and internal peace. And it is, besides, necessary for the ruler to have the criminal judicial authority in his hands so that he may use it to crush all rebellion against himself as treason and even, so far as may be possible, to stifle criticism and opposition and penalise that free thought and free speech which, by their continual seeking for a more perfect social principle and their subtle or direct encouragement to progress, are so dangerous to established powers and institutions, so subversive of the dominant thing in being by their drive towards a better thing in becoming. Unity of jurisdiction, the power to constitute tribunals, to appoint, salary and remove judges and the right to determine offences and their punishments comprise on the criminal side the whole judicial power of the sovereign. A similar unity of jurisdiction, power to constitute tribunals administering the civil law and the right to modify the laws relating to property, marriage and other social matters which concern the public order of society, comprise its civil side. But the unity and

uniformity of the civil law is of less pressing and immediate importance to the State when it is substituting itself for the natural organic society; it is not so directly essential as an instrument. Therefore it is the criminal jurisdiction which is first absorbed in a greater or less entirety.

Originally, all these powers belonged to the organic society and were put into force mainly by various natural devices of a loose and entirely customary character, such as the Indian *punchayet* or village jury, the jurisdiction of guilds or other natural associations, the judicial power of the assembly or convocations of the citizens as in the various Roman *comitia* or large and unwieldy juries chosen by lot or otherwise as in Rome and Athens, and only to a minor extent by the judicial action of the king or elders in their administrative capacity. Human societies, therefore, in their earlier development retained for a long time an aspect of great complexity in their judicial administration and neither possessed nor felt any need of a uniformity of jurisdiction or of a centralised unity in the source of judicial authority. But as the State idea develops, this unity and uniformity must arrive. It accomplishes itself at first by the gathering up of all these various jurisdictions with the king as at once the source of their sanctions and a high court of appeal and the possessor of original powers, which are exercised sometimes as in ancient India by judicial process but sometimes in more autocratic polities by ukase—the latter especially on the criminal side, in the awarding of punishments and more particularly punishments for offences against the person of the king or the authority of the State. Against this tendency to unification and State authority there militates often a

religious sense in the community which attaches as in most countries of the East a sacrosanct character to its laws and customs and tends to keep the king or State in bounds; the ruler is accepted as the administrator of justice, but he is supposed to be strictly bound by the law of which he is not the fountain but the channel. Sometimes this religious sense develops a theocratical element in the society, a Church with its separate ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction, a Shashtra in the keeping of Brahmin jurists, a law entrusted to the Ulemas. Where the religious sense maintains its predominance; a solution is found by the association of Brahmin jurists with the king or with the judge appointed by him in every State tribunal and by maintenance of the supreme authority of the Pundits or Ulemas in all moot judicial questions. Where, as in Europe, the political instinct is stronger than the religious, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction comes in time to be subordinated to the State's and finally disappears.

Thus eventually the State or the monarchy—that great instrument of the transition from the organic to the rational society—becomes the head of the law as well as the embodiment of public order and efficiency. The danger of subordinating the judiciary entirely to an executive possessed at all of arbitrary and irresponsible powers is obvious; but it is only in England—the one country always where liberty has been valued as of equal importance with order and not considered a lesser necessity or no necessity at all—that there was a successful attempt from an early period to limit the judicial power of the State. This was done partly by the firm tradition of the independence of the tribunals supported by the complete security of the judges, once

appointed, in their position and emoluments and partly by the institution of the jury system. Much room was left for oppression and injustice, as in all human institutions social or political, but the object was roughly attained. Other countries, it may be noted, have adopted the jury system but, more dominated by the instinct of order and system, have left the judiciary under the control of the executive. This, however, is not so serious a defect where the executive not only represents but is appointed and controlled by the society as where it is independent of public control.

Uniformity of the law develops on different lines from the unity and uniformity of judicial administration. In its beginnings, law is always customary and where it is freely customary, where, that is to say, it merely expresses the social habits of the people, it must, except in small societies, naturally lead to or permit considerable variety of custom. In India, any sect or even any family was permitted to develop variations of the religious and civil custom which the general law of the society was bound within vague limits to accept, and this freedom is still part of the theory of Hindu law, although now in practice it is very difficult to get any new departure recognised. This spontaneous freedom of variation is the surviving sign of a former natural or organic life of society as opposed to an intellectually ordered, rationalised or mechanised living. The organic group-life fixed its general lines and particular divergences by the general sense and instinct or intuition of the group-life rather than by the stricter structure of the reason.

The first marked sign of a rational evolution is the tendency of code and constitution to prevail over custom. But still there are codes and codes. For first there are

systems that are unwritten or only partly written and do not throw themselves into the strict code form, but are a floating mass of laws, *decreta*, precedents, and admit still of a large amount of merely customary law. And again there are systems that do take the strict code form, like the Hindu Shashtra, but are really only an ossification of custom and help to stereotype the life of the society but not to rationalise it. Finally, there are those deliberately ordered codes which are an attempt at intelligent systematisation; a sovereign authority fixes the *cadres* of the law and admits from time to time changes that are intelligent accommodations to new needs, variations that do not disturb but merely modify and develop the intelligent unity and reasonable fixity of the system. The coming to perfection of this last type is the triumph of the narrower but more self-conscious and self-helpful rational over the larger but vaguer and more helpless life-instinct in the society. When it has arrived at this triumph of a perfectly self-conscious and systematically rational determination and arrangement of its life on one side by a fixed and uniform constitution, on the other by a uniform and intelligently structural civil and criminal law, the society is ready for the second stage of its development. It can undertake the self-conscious, uniform ordering of its whole life in the light of the reason which is the principle of modern socialism and has been the drift of all the Utopias of the thinkers.

But before we can arrive at this stage, the great question must be settled, who is to be the State? Is the embodiment of the intellect, will and conscience of the society to be a king and his counsellors or a theocratic, autocratic or plutocratic governing class or a body which shall at least seem to stand sufficiently for the whole

society, or is it to be a compromise between some or all of these possibilities? The whole course of constitutional history has turned upon this question and to all appearance wavered obscurely between various possibilities; but in reality, we can see that throughout there has been acting the pressure of a necessity which travelled indeed through the monarchical, aristocratic and other stages, but had to debouch in the end in a democratic form of government. The king in his attempt to be the State—an attempt imposed on him by the impulse of his evolution—must try indeed to become the fountain as well as the head of the law; he must seek to engross the legislative as well as the administrative functions of the society, its side of efficient thought as well as its side of efficient action. But even in so doing he was only preparing the way for the democratic State.

The king, his council military and civil, the priesthood and the assembly of freemen converting itself for the purposes of war into the host, were perhaps everywhere, but certainly in the Aryan races, the elements with which the self-conscious evolution of society began: they represent the three orders of the free nation in its early and elementary form with the king as the keystone of the structure. The king may get rid of the power of the priesthood, he may reduce his council to an instrument of his will or the nobility which they represent to a political and military support for his actions, but until he has got rid of the assembly or is no longer obliged to convoke it,—like the French monarchy with its States-General summoned only once or twice in the course of centuries and under the pressure of great difficulties,—he cannot be the chief, much less the sole legislative authority. Even if he leaves the practical work of

legislation to a non-political, a judicial body like the French Parliaments, he is bound to find there a centre of resistance. Therefore the disappearance of the assembly or the power of the monarch to convoke it or not at his pleasure is always the real mark of his absolutism. But when he has got rid of or subordinated to himself all the other powers of the social life, there at that point of his highest success his failure begins; the monarchical system has fulfilled its positive part in the social evolution and all that is left to it is either to hold the State together until it has transformed itself or else to provoke by oppression the movement towards the sovereignty of the people.

The reason is that in engrossing the legislative power the monarchy has exceeded the right law of its being, it has gone beyond its dharma, it has undertaken functions which it cannot healthily and effectively fulfil. Administration is simply the regulation of the outward life of the people, the ordered maintenance of the external activities of its developed or developing being, and the king may well be their regulator; he may well fulfil the function which the Indian polity assigned to him, the upholder of the "dharma". But legislation, social development, culture, religion, even the determination of the economic life of the people are outside his proper sphere; they constitute the expression of the life, the thought, the soul of the society which, if he is a strong personality in touch with the spirit of the age, he may help to influence but which he cannot determine. They constitute the national dharma,—we must use the Indian word which alone is capable of expressing the whole idea; for our dharma means the law of our nature and it means also its formulated expression. Only the

society itself can determine the development of its own dharma or can formulate its expression; and if this is to be done not in the old way by a naturally organic and intuitive development, but by a self-conscious regulation through the organised national reason and will, then a governing body must be created which will more or less adequately represent, if it cannot quite embody, the reason and will of the whole society. A governing class, aristocracy or intelligent theocracy may represent, not indeed this but some vigorous or noble part of the national reason and will; but even that can only be a stage of development towards a democratic State. Certainly, democracy as it is now practised is not the last or penultimate stage; for it is often merely democratic in appearance and even at the best amounts to the rule of the majority and works by the vicious method of party government, defects the increasing perception of which enters largely into the present-day dissatisfaction with parliamentary systems. Even a perfect democracy is not likely to be the last stage of social evolution, but it is still the necessary broad standing-ground upon which the self-consciousness of the social being can come to its own.¹ Democracy and Socialism are, as we have already said, the sign that that self-consciousness is beginning to ripen into fullness.

Legislation may seem at first sight to be something external, simply a form for the administration, not part

¹ It does not follow that a true democracy must necessarily come into being at some time. For man individually or collectively to come to a full self-consciousness is a most difficult tangle. Before a true democracy can be established, the process is likely to be overtaken by a prematurely socialistic endeavour.

of the intimate grain of the social life like its economic forms, its religion, its education and culture. It so appears because in the past polity of the European nations it has not been like oriental legislation or Shashtra all-embracing, but has confined itself until recently to politics and constitutional law, the principles and process of administration and so much only of social and economic legislation as was barely necessary for the security of property and the maintenance of public order. All this, it might seem, might well fall within the province of the king and be discharged by him with as much efficiency as by a democratic government. But it is not so in reality, as history bears witness; the king is an inefficient legislator and unmixed aristocracies are not much better. For the laws and institutions of a society are the framework it builds for its life and its dharma. When it begins to determine these for itself by a self-conscious action of its reason and will within whatever limits, it has taken the first step in a movement which must inevitably end in an attempt to regulate self-consciously its whole social and cultural life; it must, as its self-consciousness increases, drive towards the endeavour to realise something like the Utopia of the thinker. For the Utopian thinker is the individual mind forerunning in its turn of thought the trend which the social mind must eventually take.

But as no individual thinker can determine in thought by his arbitrary reason the evolution of the rational self-conscious society, so no executive individual or succession of executive individuals can determine it in fact by his or their arbitrary power. It is evident that he cannot determine the whole social life of the nation; it is much too large for him; no society would bear the heavy hand of an arbitrary individual on its whole social living. He

cannot determine the economic life, that too is much too large for him; he can only watch over it and help it in this or that direction where help is needed. He cannot determine the religious life, though that attempt has been made; it is too deep for him; for religion is the spiritual and ethical life of the individual, the relations of his soul with God and the intimate dealings of his will and character with other individuals, and no monarch or governing class, not even a theocracy or priesthood, can really substitute itself for the soul of the individual or for the soul of a nation. Nor can he determine the national culture; he can only in great flowering times of that culture help by his protection in fixing for it the turn which by its own force of tendency it was already taking. To attempt more is an irrational attempt which cannot lead to the development of a rational society. He can only support the attempt by autocratic oppression which leads in the end to the feebleness and stagnation of the society, and justify it by some mystical falsity about the divine right of kings or monarchy a peculiarly divine institution. Even exceptional rulers, a Charlemagne, an Augustus, a Napoleon, a Chandragupta, Asoka or Akbar, can do no more than fix certain new institutions which the time needed, and help the emergence of its best or else its strongest tendencies in a critical era. When they attempt more, they fail. Akbar's effort to create a new dharma for the Indian nation by his enlightened reason was a brilliant futility. Asoka's edicts remain graven upon pillar and rock, but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of a great people. Only the rare individual Manu, Avatar or prophet who comes on earth perhaps once in a millennium can speak truly of his divine

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

right, for the secret of his force is not political but spiritual. For an ordinary political ruling man or a political institution to have made such a claim was one of the most amazing among the many follies of the human mind.

Yet the attempt itself, and apart from its false justifications and practical failure, was inevitable, fruitful and a necessary step in social evolution. It was inevitable because this transitional instrument represented the first idea of the human reason and will, seizing on the group-life to fashion, mould and arrange it according to its own pleasure and power and intelligent choice, to govern nature in the human mass as it has already learned partly to govern it in the human individual. And since the mass is unenlightened and incapable of such an intelligent effort, who can do this for it, if not the capable individual or a body of intelligent and capable individuals? That is the whole rationale of absolutism, aristocracy and theocracy. Its idea is false or only a half-truth or temporary truth, because the real business of the advanced class or individual is progressively to enlighten and train the whole body consciously to do for itself its own work and not eternally to do things for it.¹ But the idea had to take its course and the will in the idea—for every idea has in itself a mastering will for self-fulfilment,—had necessarily to attempt its own extreme. The difficulty was that the ruling man or class could take up the more mechanical part of the life of society, but all that represented its more intimate being eluded their grasp;

¹ It is not meant that in a perfect society there would be no place for the monarchical, aristocratic or theocratic elements; but there these would fulfil their natural function in a conscious body, not maintain and propel an unconscious mass.

they could not lay hands on its soul. Still, unless they could do so, they must remain unfulfilled in their trend and insecure in their possession, since at any time they might be replaced by more adequate powers that must inevitably rise up from the larger mind of humanity to oust them and occupy their throne.

Two principal devices alone seemed adequate and have been employed in all such attempts at complete mastery. One was chiefly negative; it worked by an oppression on the life and soul of the community, a more or less complete inhibition of its freedom of thought, speech, association, individual and associated action,—often attended by the most abominable methods of inquisition and interference and pressure on the most sacred relations and liberties of man the individual and social being,—and an encouragement and patronage of only such thought and culture and activities as accepted, flattered and helped the governing absolutism. Another was positive; it consisted in getting a control over the religion of the society and calling in the priest as the spiritual helper of the king. For in natural societies and in those which, even if partly intellectualised, still cling to the natural principles of our being, religion, if it is not the whole life, yet watches over and powerfully influences and moulds the whole life of the individual and society, as it did till recent times in India and to a great extent in all Asiatic countries. State religions are an expression of this endeavour. But a State religion is an artificial monstrosity, although a national religion may well be a living reality; but even that, if it is not to formalise and kill in the end the religious spirit or prevent spiritual expansion, has to be tolerant, self-adaptive, flexible, a mirror of the deeper soul of the society. Both

these devices, however seemingly successful for a time, are foredoomed to failure, failure by revolt of the oppressed social being or failure by its decay, weakness and death or life in death. Stagnation and weakness such as in the end overtook Greece, Rome, the Mussulman nations, China, India, or else a saving spiritual, social and political revolution are the only issues of absolutism. Still it was an inevitable stage of human development, an experiment that could not fail to be made. It was also fruitful in spite of its failure and even by reason of it; for the absolutist monarchical and aristocratic State was the father of the modern idea of the absolutist socialistic State which seems now to be in process of birth. It was, for all its vices, a necessary step because only so could the clear idea of an intelligently self-governing society firmly evolve.

For what king or aristocracy could not do the democratic State may, perhaps with a better chance of success and a greater security, attempt and bring nearer to fruition,—the conscious and organised unity, the regularised efficiency on uniform and intelligent principles, the rational order and self-governed perfecting of a developed society. That is the idea and, however imperfectly, the attempt of modern life; and this attempt has been the whole rationale of modern progress. Unity and uniformity are its principal trend; for how else are the incalculable complexities of the vast and profound thing we call life to be taken hold of, dominated, made calculable and manageable by a logical intelligence and unified will? Socialism is the complete expression of this idea. Uniformity of the social and economic principles and processes that govern the collectivity secured by means of a fundamental equality of all, and the

DRIVE TOWARDS LEGISLATIVE & SOCIAL CENTRALISATION

management of the whole social and economic life in all its parts by the State; uniformity of culture by the process of a State education organised upon scientific lines; to regularise and maintain the whole a unified, uniform and perfectly organised government and administration that will represent and act for the whole social being, this is the modern Utopia which in one form or another it is hoped to turn, in spite of all extant obstacles and opposite tendencies, into a living reality. Human science will, it seems, replace the large and obscure processes of Nature and bring about perfection or at least some approach to perfection in the collective human life.

CHAPTER XXII

WORLD-UNION OR WORLD-STATE

THIS, then, in principle is the history of the growth of the State. It is a history of strict unification by the development of a central authority and of a growing uniformity in administration, legislation, social and economic life and culture and the chief means of culture, education and language. In all, the central authority becomes more and more the determining and regulating power. The process culminates by the transformation of this governing sole authority or sovereign power from the rule of the central executive man or the capable class into that of a body whose proposed function is to represent the thought and will of the whole community. The change represents in principle an evolution from a natural and organic to a rational and mechanically organised state of society. An intelligent centralised unification aiming at a perfect rational efficiency replaces a loose and natural unity whose efficiency is that of life developing with a certain spontaneity its organs and powers under the pressure of inner impulse and the needs of the environment and the first conditions of existence. A rational, ordered, strict uniformity replaces a loose oneness full of natural complexities and variations. The intelligent will of the whole society expressed in a carefully thought-out law and ordered regulation replaces its natural organic will expressed in a mass of customs

and institutions which have grown up as the result of its nature and temperament. In the last perfection of the State, a carefully devised, in the end a giant machinery productive and regulative, replaces the vigour and fertility of life with the natural simplicity of its great lines and the obscure, confused, luxuriant complexity of its details. The State is the masterful but arbitrary and intolerant science and reason of man that successfully takes the place of the intuitions and evolutionary experimentations of Nature; intelligent organisation replaces natural organism.

The unity of the human race by political and administrative means implies eventually the formation and organisation of a single World-State out of a newly created, though still loose, natural organic unity of mankind. For the natural organic unity already exists, a unity of life, of involuntary association, of a closely interdependent existence of the constituent parts in which the life and movements of one affect the life of the others in a way which would have been impossible a hundred years ago. Continent has no longer a separate life from continent; no nation can any longer isolate itself at will and live a separate existence. Science, commerce and rapid communications have produced a state of things in which the disparate masses of humanity, once living to themselves, have drawn together by a process of subtle unification into a single mass which has already a common vital and is rapidly forming a common mental existence. A great precipitating and transforming shock was needed which should make this subtle organic unity manifest and reveal the necessity and create the will for a closer and organised union and this shock came with the Great War. The idea of a World-State or world-union

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

has been born not only in the speculating forecasting mind of the thinker, but in the consciousness of humanity out of the very necessity of this new common existence.

The World-State must now either be brought about by a mutual understanding or by the force of circumstances and a series of new and disastrous shocks. For the old still-prevailing order of things was founded on circumstances and conditions which no longer exist. A new order is demanded by the new conditions and, so long as it is not created, there will be a transitional era of continued trouble or recurrent disorders, inevitable crises through which Nature will effect in her own violent way the working out of the necessity which she has evolved. There may be in the process a maximum of loss and suffering through the clash of national and imperial egoisms or else a minimum, if reason and goodwill prevail. To that reason two alternative possibilities and therefore two ideals present themselves, a World-State founded upon the principle of centralisation and uniformity, a mechanical and formal unity, or a world-union founded upon the principle of liberty and variation in a free and intelligent unity. These two ideas and possibilities we have successively to consider.

CHAPTER XXIII

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

THE idea of a world-union of free nations and empires, loose at first, but growing closer-knit with time and experience, seems at first sight the most practicable form of political unity; it is the only form indeed which would be immediately practicable, supposing the will to unity to become rapidly effective in the mind of the race. On the other hand, it is the State idea which is now dominant. The State has been the most successful and efficient means of unification and has been best able to meet the various needs which the progressive aggregate life of societies has created for itself and is still creating. It is, besides, the expedient to which the human mind at present has grown accustomed, and it is too the most ready means both for its logical and its practical reason to work with because it provides it with what our limited intelligence is always tempted to think its best instrument, a clear-cut and precise machinery and a stringent method of organisation. Therefore it is by no means impossible that, even though beginning with a loose union, the nations may be rapidly moved by the pressure of the many problems which would arise from the ever closer interworking of their needs and interests, to convert it into the more stringent form of a World-State. We can found no safe conclusion upon the immediate impracticability of its creation or on the many

difficulties which would stand in its way; for past experience shows that the argument of impracticability is of very little value. What the practical man of today denies as absurd and impracticable is often enough precisely the thing that future generations set about realising and eventually in some form or other succeed in bringing into effective existence.

But a World-State implies a strong central organ of power that would represent or at least stand for the united will of the nations. A unification of all the necessary powers in the hands of this central and common governing body, at least in their source—powers military, administrative, judicial, economic, legislative, social, educational would be indispensable. And as an almost inevitable result there would be an increasing uniformity of human life throughout the world in all these departments, even perhaps to the choice or creation of one common and universal language. This, indeed, is the dream of a unified world which Utopian thinkers have been more and more moved to place before us. The difficulties in the way of arriving at this result are at present obvious, but they are perhaps not so great as they seem at first sight and none of them are insoluble. It is no longer a Utopia that can be put aside as the impracticable dream of the ideal thinker.

The first difficulty would be the character and composition of this governing body, a problem beset with doubts and perils. In ancient times it was solved readily enough in smaller limits by the absolutist and monarchical solution with the rule of a conquering race as the starting-point, as in the Persian and Roman empires. But that resource is no longer as easily open to us in the new conditions of human society, whatever dreams

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

may in the past have entered into the minds of powerful nations or their Czars and Kaisers. The monarchical idea itself is beginning to pass away after a brief and fallacious attempt at persistence and revival. Almost it seems to be nearing its final agony; the seal of the night is upon it. Contemporary appearances are often enough deceptive, but they are less likely to be so in the present instance than in many others, because the force which makes for the disappearance of the still-surviving monarchies is strong, radical and ever increasing. The social aggregates have ripened into self-conscious maturity and no longer stand in need of a hereditary kingship to do their governing work for them or even to stand for them—except perhaps in certain exceptional cases such as the British Empire—as the symbol of their unity. Either then the monarchy can only survive in name,—as in England where the king has less power even, if that be possible, than the French President and infinitely less than the heads of the American republics,—or else it becomes a source of offence, a restraint to the growing democratic spirit of the peoples and to a greater or less degree a centre, a refuge or at least an opportunity for the forces of reaction. Its prestige and popularity tend therefore not to increase but to decline, and at some crisis when it comes too strongly into conflict with the sentiment of the nation, it falls with small chance of lasting revival.

Monarchy has thus fallen or is threatened almost everywhere—and most suddenly in countries where its tradition was once the strongest. Even in these days it has fallen in Germany and Austria, in China, in Portugal, in Russia; it has been in peril in Greece and Italy;¹ and it has been

¹ Now in Italy too it is gone with practically no hope of return.

cast out of Spain. In no continental country is it really safe except in some of the smaller States. In most of them it exists for reasons that already belong to the past and may soon lose, if they are not already losing, their force. The continent of Europe seems destined to become in time as universally republican as the two Americas. For kingship there is now only a survival of the world's past; it has no deep root in the practical needs or the ideals or the temperament of present-day humanity. When it disappears, it will be truer to say of it that it has ceased to survive than to say that it has ceased to live.

The republican tendency is indeed Western in its origin, stronger as we go more and more to the West, and has been historically powerful chiefly in Western Europe and dominant in the new societies of America. It might be thought that with the entrance of Asia into the active united life of the world, when the eastern continent has passed through its present throes of transition, the monarchical idea might recover strength and find a new source of life. For in Asia kingship has been not only a material fact resting upon political needs and conditions, but a spiritual symbol and invested with a sacrosanct character. But in Asia no less than in Europe, monarchy has been a historical growth, the result of circumstances and therefore subject to disappearance when those circumstances no longer exist. The true mind of Asia has always remained, behind all surface appearances, not political but social, monarchical and aristocratic at the surface but with a fundamental democratic trend and a theocratic spirit. Japan with its deep-rooted monarchic sentiment is the one prominent exception to this general rule. Already a great tendency of change is manifest. China, always a democratic country at bottom though admitting in its

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

democratic system an official aristocracy of intellect and a symbolic imperial head, is now definitely republican. The difficulty of the attempt to revive monarchy or to replace it by temporary dictatorships has been due to an innate democratic sentiment now invigorated by the acceptance of a democratic form for the supreme government, the one valuable contribution of Western experience to the problem at which the old purely social democracies of the East were unable to arrive. In breaking with the last of its long succession of dynasties China had broken with an element of her past which was rather superficial than at the very centre of her social temperament and habits. In India the monarchical sentiment, which coexisted with but was never able to prevail over the theocratic and social except during the comparatively brief rule of the Moghuls, was hopelessly weakened though not effaced, by the rule of a British bureaucracy and the political Europeanising of the active mind of the race.¹ In Western Asia monarchy has disappeared in Turkey, it exists only in the States which need the monarch as a centralising power or keystone.

At the two extremes of the Asiatic world in Japan and in Turkey the monarchy after the close of the war still preserved something of its old sacrosanct character and its appeal to the sentiment of the race. In Japan, still imperfectly democratised, the sentiment which surrounds the Mikado is visibly weakened, his prestige

¹ Now with the liberation of the country and the establishment of a republican and democratic constitution, the ruling princes have either disappeared or become subordinate heads with their small kingdoms becoming partly or wholly democratised or destined to melt into a united India.

survives but his actual power is very limited, and the growth of democracy and socialism is bound to aid the weakening and limiting process and may well produce the same results as in Europe. The Moslem Caliphate, originally the head of a theocratic democracy, was converted into a political institution by the rapid growth of a Moslem empire, now broken into pieces. The Caliphate now abolished could only have survived as a purely religious headship and even in that character its unity was threatened by the rise of new spiritual and national movements in Persia, Arabia and Egypt. But the one real and important fact in Asia of today is this that the whole active force of its future is centred not in priesthood or aristocracy, but, as it was formerly in Russia before the Revolution, in a newly-created intelligentsia, small at first in numbers, but increasing in energy and the settled will to arrive and bound to become exceedingly dynamic by reason of the inherited force of spirituality. Asia may well preserve its ancient spirituality; even in its hour of greatest weakness it has been able to impose its prestige increasingly even on the positive European mind. But whatever turn that spirituality takes, it will be determined by the mentality of this new intelligentsia and will certainly flow into other channels than the old ideas and symbols. The old forms of Asiatic monarchy and theocracy seem therefore destined to disappear; at present there is no chance of their revival in new figures, although that may happen in the future.

The only apparent chance eventually for the monarchical idea is that its form may be retained as a convenient symbol for the unity of the heterogeneous empires which would be the largest elements in any unification based upon the present political configuration of the world.

But even for these empires the symbol has not proved to be indispensable. France has done without it, Russia has recently dispensed with it. In Austria it had become odious to some of the constituent races as the badge of subjection and was bound to perish even without the collapse of the Great War. Only in England and in some small countries is it at once innocuous and useful and therefore upheld by a general feeling. Conceivably, if the British Empire,¹ even now the leading, the most influential, the most powerful force in the world, were to become the nucleus or the pattern of the future unification, there might be some chance of the monarchical element surviving in the figure—and even an empty figure is sometimes useful as a support and centre for future potentialities to grow and fill with life. But against this stands the fixed republican sentiment of the whole of America and the increasing spread of the republican form; there is a little chance that even a nominal kingship representing one element of a very heterogeneous whole would be accepted by the rest in any form of general unification. In the past, at least, this has only happened under the stress of conquest. Even if the World-State found it convenient as the result of experience to introduce or to re-introduce the monarchical element into its constitution, it could only be in some quite new form of a democratic kingship. But a democratic kingship, as opposed to a passive figure of monarchy, the modern world has not succeeded in evolving.

The two determining facts in modern conditions which alter the whole problem are that in this kind of unification nations take the place of individuals and that these nations

¹ Now no longer Empire but Commonwealth.

are mature self-conscious societies, predestined therefore to pass through pronounced forms of social democracy or some other form of socialism. It is reasonable to suppose that the World-State will tend to strive after the same principle of formation as that which obtains in the separate societies which are to constitute it. The problem would be simpler if we could suppose the difficulties created by conflicting national temperaments, interests and cultures to be either eliminated or successfully subordinated and minimised by the depression of separatist nationalistic feeling and the growth of a cosmopolitan internationalism. That solution is not altogether impossible in spite of the serious check to internationalism and the strong growth of nationalistic feeling developed by the world war. For, conceivably, internationalism may revive with a redoubled force after the stress of the feelings created by the war has passed. In that case, the tendency of unification may look to the ideal of a world-wide Republic with the nations as provinces, though at first very sharply distinct provinces, and governed by a council or parliament responsible to the united democracies of the world. Or it might be something like the disguised oligarchy of an international council reposing its rule on the assent, expressed by election or otherwise, of what might be called a semi-passive democracy as its first figure. For that is what the modern democracy at present is in fact; the sole democratic elements are public opinion, periodical elections and the power of the people to refuse re-election to those who have displeased it. The government is really in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the professional and business men, the landholders—where such a class still exists,—strengthened by a number of new arrivals from the working-class who very soon

assimilate themselves to the political temperament and ideas of the governing classes.¹ If a World-State were to be established on the present basis of human society, it might well try to develop its central government on this principle.

But the present is a moment of transition and a bourgeois World-State is not a probable consummation. In each of the more progressive nations, the dominance of the middle class is threatened on two sides. There is first the dissatisfaction of the intellectuals who find in its unimaginative business practicality and obstinate commercialism an obstacle to the realisation of their ideals. And there is the dissatisfaction of the great and growing power of Labour which sees democratic ideals and changes continually exploited in the interests of the middle class, though as yet it has found no alternative to the Parliamentaryism by which that class ensures its rule.² What changes the alliance between these two dissatisfactions may bring about, it is impossible to foresee. In Russia, where it was strongest, we have seen it taking the lead of the Revolution and compelling the bourgeoisie to undergo its control, although the compromise so effected could not long outlast the exigencies of the war. Since then the old order there has been "liquidated" and the triumph of the new tendencies has been complete. In two direc-

¹ This has now changed and the Trade Unions and similar institutions have attained an equal power with the other classes.

² Written before the emergence of the Soviet State in Russia and of the Fascist States. In the latter it is the middle class itself that rose against democracy and established for a time a new form of government and society.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

tions it may lead to a new form of modified oligarchy with a democratic basis. The government of a modern society is now growing an exceedingly complicated business in each part of which a special knowledge, special competence, special faculties are required and every new step towards State socialism must increase this tendency. The need of this sort of special training or faculty in the councillor and administrator combined with the democratic tendencies of the age might well lead to some modern form of the old Chinese principle of government, a democratic organisation of life below, above the rule of a sort of intellectual bureaucracy, an official aristocracy of special knowledge and capacity recruited from the general body without distinction of classes. Equal opportunity would be indispensable but this governing elite would still form a class by itself in the constitution of the society. On the other hand, if the industrialism of the modern nations changes, as some think it will, and develops into a sort of guild socialism, a guild aristocracy of Labour might well become the governing body in the society.¹ If any of these things were done, any movement towards a World-State would then take the same direction and evolve a governing body of the same model.

But in these two possibilities we leave out of consideration the great factor of nationalism and the conflicting interests and tendencies it creates. To overcome these conflicting interests, it has been supposed, the best way

¹ Something of the kind was attempted in Soviet Russia for a time. The existing conditions were not favourable and a definite form of government not revolutionary and provisional is not anywhere in sight. In Fascist Italy a co-operative State was announced but this too took no effectual or perfect shape.

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

is to evolve a sort of world Parliament in which, it is to be presumed, the freely formed and freely expressed opinion of the majority would prevail. Parliamentaryism, the invention of the English political genius, is a necessary stage in the evolution of democracy, for without it the generalised faculty of considering and managing with the least possible friction large problems of politics, administration, economics, legislation concerning considerable aggregates of men cannot easily be developed. It has also been the one successful means yet discovered of preventing the State executive from suppressing the liberties of the individual and the nation. Nations emerging into the modern form of society are therefore naturally and rightly attracted to this instrument of government. But it has not yet been found possible to combine Parliamentaryism and the modern trend towards a more democratic democracy; it has been always an instrument either of a modified aristocratic or of a middle class rule. Besides, its method involves an immense waste of time and energy and a confused, swaying and uncertain action that "muddle out" in the end some tolerable result. This method accords ill with the more stringent ideas of efficient government and administration that are now growing in force and necessity and it might be fatal to efficiency in anything so complicated as the management of the affairs of the world. Parliamentaryism means too, in practice, the rule and often the tyranny of a majority, even of a very small majority, and the modern mind attaches increasing importance to the rights of minorities. And these rights would be still more important in a World-State where any attempt to override them might easily mean serious discontents and disorders or even convulsions fatal to the whole fabric. Above all, a Parliament

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

of the nations must necessarily be a united parliament of free nations and could not well come into successful being in the present anomalous and chaotic distribution of power in the world. The Asiatic problem alone, if still left unsolved, would be a fatal obstacle and it is not alone; the inequalities and anomalies are all-pervasive and without number.

A more feasible form would be a supreme council of the free and imperial nations of the existing world-system, but this also has its difficulties. It could only be workable at first if it amounted in fact to an oligarchy of a few strong imperial nations whose voice and volume would prevail at every point over that of the more numerous but smaller non-imperialistic commonwealths and it could only endure by a progressive and, if possible, a peaceful evolution from this sort of oligarchy of actual power to a more just and ideal system in which the imperialistic idea would dissolve and the great empires merge their separate existence into that of a unified mankind. How far national egoism would allow that evolution to take place without vehement struggles and dangerous convulsions, is, in spite of the superficial liberalism now widely professed, a question still fraught with grave and ominous doubts.

On the whole, then, whichever way we turn, this question of the form of a World-State is beset with doubts and difficulties that are for the moment insoluble. Some arise from the surviving sentiments and interests of the past; some menace from the rapidly developing revolutionary forces of the future. It does not follow that they can never or will never be solved, but the way and the line any such solution would take are beyond calculation and can really be determined only by practical experience

FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

and experiment under the pressure of the forces and necessities of the modern world. For the rest, the form of government is not of supreme importance. The real problem is that of the unification of powers and the uniformity which any manageable system of a World-State would render inevitable.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION

IN the process of centralisation by which all the powers of an organised community come to be centred in one sovereign governing body—the process which has been the most prominent characteristic of national formations,—military necessity has played at the beginning the largest overt part. This necessity was both external and internal,—external for the defence of the nation against disruption or subjection from without, internal for its defence against civil disruption and disorder. If a common administrative authority is essential in order to bind together the constituent parts of a nation in the forming, the first need and claim of that central authority is to have in its hands the means to prevent mortal dissidence and violent strife that would weaken or break up the organic formation. The monarchy or any other central body must effect this end partly by moral force and psychological suggestion. For it stands as the symbol of union and imposes respect for their visible and consecrated unity on the constituent parts, however strong may be their local, racial, clan or class instincts of separatism. It embodies the united authority of the nation entitled to impose its moral force as greater than the moral right of the separate parts, even if they be something like sub-nations, and to command their obedience. But in the last resort, since these motives may at any

THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION

moment fail when revolting interests or sentiments are strong and passions run high, the governing body must have always the greatest military force at its command so as to overawe the constituent elements and prevent the outbreak of a disruptive civil war. Or if the civil war or rebellion comes about, as can always happen when the monarchy or the government is identified closely with one of the parties in a quarrel or is itself the subject of dissatisfaction and attack, then it must have so great a predominance of force behind it as to be morally sure of victory in the conflict. This can only be secured to the best possible perfection,—it cannot be done absolutely except by an effective disarmament,—if the whole military authority is centred in the central body and the whole actual or potential military force of the society subjected to its undivided control.

In the trend to the formation of the World-State, however subconscious, vague and formless it may yet be, military necessity has begun to play the same large visible part. The peoples of the world already possess a loose and chaotic unity of life in which none can any longer lead an isolated, independent and self-dependent existence. Each feels in its culture, political tendencies and economic existence the influence and repercussion of events and movements in other parts of the world. Each already feels subtly or directly its separate life overshadowed by the life of the whole. Science, international commerce and the political and cultural penetration of Asia and Africa by the dominant West have been the agents of this great change. Even in this loose unacknowledged and underlying unity the occurrence or the possibility of great wars has become a powerful element of disturbance to the whole fabric, a disturbance that may

one day become mortal to the race. Even before the European war, the necessity of avoiding or minimising a collision between one or two that might prove fatal to all was keenly felt and various well-intentioned but feeble and blundering devices were tentatively introduced which had that end in view. Had any of these makeshifts been tolerably effective, the world might long have remained content with its present very unideal conditions and the pressing need of a closer international organisation would not have enforced itself on the general mind of the race. But the European collision rendered the indefinite continuance of the old chaotic regime impossible. The necessity of avoiding any repetition of the catastrophe was for a time universally acknowledged. A means of keeping international peace and of creating an authority which shall have the power to dispose of dangerous international questions and prevent what from the new point of view of human unity we may call civil war between the peoples of mankind, had somehow or other to be found or created.

Various ideas were put forward with more or less authority as to the necessary conditions of international peace. The crudest of these was the foolish notion created by a one-sided propaganda, which imagined that the destruction of German militarism was the one thing needful and in itself sufficient to secure the future peace of the world. The military power, the political and commercial ambitions of Germany and her acute sense of her confined geographical position and her encirclement by an unfriendly alliance were the immediate moral cause of this particular war; but the real cause lay in the very nature of the international situation and the psychology of national life. The chief feature of this psychology is the predominance and worship of national egoism under the

sacred name of patriotism. Every national ego, like every organic life, desires a double self-fulfilment, intensive and extensive or expansive. The deepening and enriching of its culture, political strength and economic well-being within its borders is not felt to be sufficient if there is not, without, an extension or expansion of its culture, an increase of its political extent, dominion, power or influence and a masterful widening of its commercial exploitation of the world. This natural and instinctive desire is not an abnormal moral depravity but the very instinct of egoistic life; and what life at present is not egoistic? But it can be satisfied only to a very limited degree by peaceful and unaggressive means. And where it feels itself hemmed in by obstacles that it thinks it can overcome, opposed by barriers, encircled, dissatisfied with a share of possession and domination it considers disproportionate to its needs and its strength, or where new possibilities of expansion open out to it in which only its strength can obtain for it its desirable portion, it is at once moved to the use of some kind of force and can only be restrained by the amount of resistance it is likely to meet. If it has a weak opposition of unorganised or ill-organised peoples to overcome, it will not hesitate; if it has the opposition of powerful rivals to fear, it will pause, seek for alliances or watch for its moment. Germany had not the monopoly of this expansive instinct and egoism; but its egoism was the best organised and least satisfied, the youngest, crudest, hungriest, most self-confident and presumptuous, most satisfied with the self-righteous brutality of its desires. The breaking of German militarism might ease for a moment the intensity of the many-headed commercial wrestle but it cannot, by the removal of a dangerous and restless competitor, end it. So long as any

kind of militarism survives, so long as fields of political or commercial aggrandisement are there and so long as national egoisms live and are held sacred and there is no final check on their inherent instinct of expansion, war will be always a possibility and almost a necessity of the life of the human peoples.

Another idea put forward with great authorities behind it was a league of free and democratic nations which would keep the peace by pressure or by the use of force if need be. If less crude, the solution is not for that any more satisfactory than the other. It is an old idea, the idea Metternich put into practice after the overthrow of Napoleon; only in place of a Holy Alliance of monarchs to maintain peace and monarchical order and keep down democracy, it was proposed to have a league of free—and imperial—peoples to enforce democracy and to maintain peace. One thing is perfectly sure that the new league would go the way of the old; it would break up as soon as the interests and ambitions of the constituent Powers became sufficiently disunited or a new situation arose such as was created by the violent resurgence of oppressed democracy in 1848 or such as would be created by the inevitable future duel between the young Titan, Socialism, and the old Olympian gods of a bourgeois-democratic world. That conflict was already outlining its formidable shadow in revolutionary Russia, has now taken a body and cannot be very long delayed throughout Europe. For the war and its after consequences momentarily suspended but it may very well turn out to have really precipitated the advent and accentuated its force. One cause or the other or both together would bring a certain dissolution. No voluntary league can be permanent in its nature. The ideas which

THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION

supported it, change; the interests which made it possible and effective become fatally modified or obsolete.

The supposition is that democracies will be less ready to go to war than monarchies; but this is true only within a certain measure. What are called democracies are bourgeois States in the form either of a constitutional monarchy or a middle-class republic. But everywhere the middle class has taken over with certain modifications the diplomatic habits, foreign policies and international ideas of the monarchical or aristocratic governments which preceded them.¹ This continuity seems to have been a natural law of the mentality of the ruling class. In Germany it was the aristocratic and the capitalist class combined that constituted the Pan-German party with its exaggerated and almost insane ambition. In the new Russia the bourgeoisie during its brief rule rejected the political ideas of the Czardom in internal affairs and helped to overturn autocracy, but preserved its ideas in external affairs minus the German influence and stood for the expansion of Russia and the possession of Constantinople. Certainly, there is an important difference. The monarchical or aristocratic State is political in its mentality and seeks first of all territorial aggrandisement and political predominance or hegemony among the nations, commercial aims are only a secondary preoccupation attendant on the other. In the bourgeois State there is a reverse order, for it has its eye chiefly on the possession of markets, the command of new fields of wealth, the formation or conquest of colonies or dependencies which can be commercially and industrially

¹ So also has Socialist Russia taken over from the Czars these ideas and habits with very little or no modification.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

exploited and on political aggrandisement only as a means for this more cherished object. Moreover, the monarchical or aristocratic statesman turned to war as almost his first expedient. As soon as he was dissatisfied with the response to his diplomacy, he grasped at the sword or the rifle. The bourgeois statesman hesitates, calculates, gives a longer rope to diplomacy, tries to gain his ends by bargainings, arrangements, peaceful pressure, demonstrations of power. In the end he is ready to resort to war, but only when these expedients have failed him and only if the end seems commensurate with the means and the great speculation of war promises a very strong chance of success and solid profit. But on the other hand, the bourgeois democratic State has developed a stupendous military organisation of which the most powerful monarchs and aristocracies could not dream. And if this tends to delay the outbreak of large wars, it tends too to make their final advent and their proportions enormous and nowadays incalculable and immeasurable.

There was a strong suggestion at the time that a more truly democratic and therefore a more peaceful spirit and more thoroughly democratic institutions would reign after the restoration of peace by the triumph of the liberal nations. One rule of the new international situation was to be the right of nations to dispose of their own destinies and to be governed only by their free consent. The latter condition is impossible of immediate fulfilment except in Europe, and even for Europe the principle is not really recognised in its total meaning or put into entire practice. If it were capable of universal application, if the existing relations of peoples and the psychology of nations could be so altered as to

THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION

establish it as a working principle, one of the most fertile causes of war and revolution would be removed, but all causes would not disappear. The greater democratisation of the European peoples affords no sure guarantee. Certainly, democracy of a certain kind, democracy reposing for its natural constitution on individual liberty would be likely to be indisposed to war except in moments of great and universal excitement. War demands a violent concentration of all the forces, a spirit of submission, a suspension of free-will, free action and of the right of criticism which is alien to the true democratic instinct. But the democracies of the future are likely to be strongly concentrated governments in which the principle of liberty is subordinated to the efficient life of the community by some form of State socialism. A democratic State of that kind might well have even a greater power for war, might be able to put forward a more violently concentrated military organisation in event of hostilities than even the bourgeois democracies and it is not at all certain that it would be less tempted to use its means and power. Socialism has been international and pacific in its tendencies, because the necessity of preparation for war is favourable to the rule of the upper classes and because war itself is used in the interests of the governments and the capitalists; the ideas and classes it represents are at present depressed and do not grow by the uses or share visibly in the profits of war. What will happen when they have hold of the government and its temptations and opportunities has to be seen but can easily be forecast. The possession of power is the great test of all idealisms and as yet there have been none religious or secular which have withstood it or escaped diminution and corruption.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

To rely upon the common consent of conflicting national egoisms for the preservation of peace between the nations is to rely upon a logical contradiction. A practical improbability which, if we can judge by reason and experience amounts to an impossibility, can hardly be a sound foundation for the building of the future. A League of Peace can only prevent armed strife for a time. A system of enforced arbitration, even with the threat of a large armed combination against the offender, may minimise the chance of war and may absolutely forbid it to the smaller or weaker nations; but a great nation which sees a chance of making itself the centre of a strong combination of peoples interested in upsetting the settled order of things for their own benefit, might always choose to take the risks of the adventure in the hope of snatching advantages which in its estimation outweighed the risks.¹ Moreover, in times of great upheaval and movement when large ideas, enormous interests and inflamed passions divide the peoples of the world, the whole system would be likely to break to pieces and the very elements of its efficacy would cease to exist. Any tentative and imperfect device would be bound before long to disclose its inefficacy and the attempt at a deliberate organisation of international life would have to be abandoned and the work left to be wrought out confusedly by the force of events. The creation of a real, efficient and powerful authority which would stand for the general sense and the general power of mankind in its collective life and spirit and would be something more than a bundle of

¹ The subsequent history of the League of Nations, which had not been formed at the time of writing, has amply proved the inefficacy of these devices.

THE NEED OF MILITARY UNIFICATION

vigorously separate States loosely tied together by the frail bond of a violable moral agreement is the only effective step possible on this path. Whether such an authority can really be created by agreement, whether it must not rather create itself partly by the growth of ideas, but still more by the shock of forces, is a question to which the future alone can answer.

An authority of this nature would have to command the psychological assent of mankind, exercise a moral force upon the nations greater than that of their own national authority and compel more readily their obedience under all normal circumstances. It would have not only to be a symbol and a centre of the unity of the race but make itself constantly serviceable to the world by assuring the effective maintenance and development of large common interests and benefits which would outweigh all separate national interests and satisfy entirely the sense of need that had brought it into existence. It must help more and more to fix the growing sense of a common humanity and a common life in which the sharp divisions which separate country from country, race from race, colour from colour, continent from continent would gradually lose their force and undergo a progressive effacement. Given these conditions, it would develop a moral authority which would enable it to pursue with less and less opposition and friction the unification of mankind. The nature of the psychological assent it secured from the beginning would depend largely on its constitution and character and would in its turn determine both the nature and power of the moral authority it could exercise on the earth's peoples. If its constitution and character were such as to conciliate the sentiment and interest in its maintenance the active support of all or

most of the different sections of mankind or at least those whose sentiment and support counted powerfully and to represent the leading political, social, cultural ideas and interests of the time, it would have the maximum of psychological assent and moral authority and its way would be comparatively smooth. If defective in these respects, it would have to make up the deficiency by a greater concentration and show of military force at its back and by extraordinary and striking services to the general life, culture and development of the human race such as assured for the Roman imperial authority the long and general assent of the Mediterranean and Western peoples to the subjection and the obliteration of their national existence.

But in either case the possession and concentration of military power would be for long the first condition of its security, and the effectiveness of its own control and this possession would have to be, as soon as possible, a sole possession. It is difficult at present to foresee the consent of the nations of the world to their own total disarmament. For so long as strong national egoisms of any kind remained and along with them mutual distrust, the nations would not sacrifice their possession of an armed force on which they could rely for self-defence if their interests or at least those that they considered essential to their prosperity and their existence, came to be threatened. Any distrust of the assured impartiality of the international government would operate in the same direction. Yet such a disarmament would be essential to the assured cessation of war—in the absence of some great and radical psychological and moral change. If national armies exist, the possibility, even the certainty of war will exist along with them.

However small they might be made in times of peace, an international authority, even with a military force of its own behind it, would be in the position of the feudal king never quite sure of his effective control over his vassals. The international authority must hold under its command the sole trained military force in the world for the policing of the nations and also—otherwise the monopoly would be ineffective—the sole disposal of the means of manufacturing arms and implements of war. National and private munition factories and arms factories must disappear. National armies must become like the old baronial armies a memory of past and dead ages.

This consummation would mark definitely the creation of a World-State in place of the present international conditions. For it can be brought into truly effective existence only if the international authority became, not merely the arbiter of disputes, but the source of law and the final power behind their execution. For the execution of its decrees against recalcitrant countries or classes, for the prevention of all kinds of strife not merely political but commercial, industrial and others or at least of their decision by any other ways than a peaceful resort to law and arbitration, for the suppression of any attempt at violent change and revolution, the World-State, even at its strongest, would still need the concentration of all force in its own hands. While man remains what he is, force, in spite of all idealisms and generous pacific hopes, must remain the ultimate arbiter and governor of his life, and its possessor the real ruler. Force may veil its crude presence at ordinary times and take only mild and civilised forms,—mild in comparison, for are not the jail and the executioner still the two great pillars of the

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

social order?—but it is there silently upholding the specious appearances of our civilisation and ready to intervene, whenever called upon, in the workings of the fairer but still feebler gods of the social cosmos. Diffused force fulfils the free workings of Nature and is the servant of life but also of discord and struggle; concentrated, it becomes the guarantee of organisation and the bond of order.

CHAPTER XXV

WAR AND THE NEED OF ECONOMIC UNITY

THE military necessity, the pressure of war between nations and the need for prevention of war by the assumption of force and authority in the hands of an international body, World-State or Federation or League of Peace, is that which will most directly drive humanity in the end towards some sort of international union. But there is behind it another necessity which is much more powerful in its action on the modern mind, the commercial and industrial, the necessity born of economic interdependence. Commercialism is a modern sociological phenomenon; one might almost say, that is the whole phenomenon of modern society. The economic part of life is always important to an organised community and even fundamental; but in former times it was simply the first need, it was not that which occupied the thoughts of men, gave the whole tone to the social life, stood at the head and was clearly recognised as standing at the root of social principles. Ancient man was in the group primarily a political being, in the Aristotelian sense,—as soon as he ceased to be primarily religious,—and to this preoccupation he added, wherever he was sufficiently at ease, the preoccupation of thought, art and culture. The economic impulses of the group were worked out as a mechanical necessity, a strong desire in the vital being rather than a leading thought in the mind. Nor

was the society regarded or studied as an economic organism except in a very superficial aspect. The economic man held an honourable, but still a comparatively low position in the society; he was only the third caste or class, the Vaishya. The lead was in the hands of the intellectual and political classes,—the Brahmin, thinker, scholar, philosopher and priest, the Kshatriya, ruler and warrior. It was their thoughts and preoccupations that gave the tone to society, determined its conscious drift and action, coloured most powerfully all its motives. Commercial interests entered into the relations of States and into the motives of war and peace; but they entered as subordinate and secondary predisposing causes of amity or hostility and only rarely and as it were accidentally came to be enumerated among the overt and conscious causes of peace, alliance and strife. The political consciousness, the political motive dominated; increase of wealth was primarily regarded as a means of political power and greatness and opulence of the mobilisable resources of the State than as an end in itself or a first consideration.

Everything now is changed. The phenomenon of modern social development is the decline of the Brahmin and Kshatriya, of the Church, the military aristocracy and the aristocracy of letters and culture, and the rise to power or predominance of the commercial and industrial classes, Vaishya and Shudra, Capital and Labour. Together they have swallowed up or cast out their rivals and are now engaged in a fratricidal conflict for sole possession in which the completion of the downward force of social gravitation, the ultimate triumph of Labour and the remodelling of all social conceptions and institutions with Labour as the first, the most dignified term which will

give its value to all others seem to be the visible writing of Fate. At present, however, it is the Vaishya who still predominates and his stamp on the world is commercialism, the predominance of the economic man, the universality of the commercial value or the utilitarian and materially efficient and productive value for everything in human life. Even in the outlook on knowledge, thought, science, art, poetry and religion the economic conception of life overrides all others.¹

For the modern economic view of life, culture and its products have chiefly a decorative value; they are costly and desirable luxuries, not at all indispensable necessities. Religion is in this view a by-product of the human mind with a very restricted utility—if indeed it is not a waste and a hindrance. Education has a recognised importance but its object and form are no longer so much cultural as scientific, utilitarian and economic, its value the preparation of the efficient individual unit to take his place in the body of the economic organisation. Science is of immense importance not because it discovers the secrets of Nature for the advancement of knowledge, but because it utilises them for the creation of machinery and develops and organises the economic resources of the community. The thought-power of the society, almost its soul-power—if it has any longer so unsubstantial and unproductive a

¹ It is noticeable that the bourgeois habit of the predominance of commercialism has been taken up and continued in an even larger scale by the new Socialist societies though on the basis of a labour, instead of a bourgeois economy, and an attempt at a new distribution of its profits or else, more characteristically, a concentration of all in the hands of the State.

thing as a soul—is not in its religion or its literature, although the former drags on a feeble existence and the latter teems and spawns, but in the daily Press primarily an instrument of commercialism and governed by the political and commercial spirit and not like literature a direct instrument of culture. Politics, government itself are becoming more and more a machinery for the development of an industrialised society, divided between the service of bourgeois capitalism and the office of a half-involuntary channel for the incoming of economic Socialism. Free thought and culture remain on the surface of this great increasing mass of commercialism and influence and modify it, but are themselves more and more influenced, penetrated, coloured, subjugated by the economic, commercial and industrial view of human life.

This great change has affected profoundly the character of international relations in the past and is likely to affect them still more openly and powerfully in the future. For there is no apparent probability of a turn in a new direction in the immediate future. Certain prophetic voices announce indeed the speedy passing of the age of commercialism. But it is not easy to see how this is to come about; certainly, it will not be by a reversion to the predominantly political spirit of the past or the temper and forms of the old aristocratic social type. The sigh of the extreme conservative mind for the golden age of the past, which was not so golden as it appears to an imaginative eye in the distance, is a vain breath blown to the winds by the rush of the car of the Time-Spirit in the extreme velocity of its progress. The end of commercialism can only come about either by some unexpected development of commercialism itself or through a reawakening of spirituality in the race and its coming to its own by the subordination

of the political and economic motives of life to the spiritual motive.

Certain signs are thought to point in this direction. The religious spirit is reviving and even the old discouraged religious creeds and forms are recovering a kind of vigour. In the secular thought of mankind there are signs of an idealism which increasingly admits a spiritual element among its motives. But all this is as yet slight and superficial; the body of thought and practice, the effective motive, the propelling impulsion remain untouched and unchanged. That impulsion is still towards the industrialising of the human race and the perfection of the life of society as an economic and productive organism. Nor is this spirit likely to die as yet by exhaustion, for it has not yet fulfilled itself and is growing, not declining in force. It is aided, moreover, by modern Socialism which promises to be the master of the future; for Socialism proceeds on the Marxian principle that its own reign has to be preceded by an age of bourgeois capitalism of which it is to be the inheritor and seize upon its work and organisation in order to turn it to its own uses and modify it by its own principles and methods. It intends indeed to substitute Labour as the Master instead of Capital;¹ but this only means that all activities will be valued by the labour contributed and work produced

¹ The connection between Socialism and the democratic or equalitarian idea or the revolt of the proletariat is however an accident of its history, not its essence. In Italian Fascism there arose a Socialism undemocratic and non-equalitarian in its form, idea and temper. Fascism has gone, but there is no inevitable connection between Socialism and the domination of Labour.

rather than by the wealth contribution and production. It will be a change from one side of economism to the other, but not a change from economism to the domination of some other and higher motive of human life. The change itself is likely to be one of the chief factors with which international unification will have to deal and either its greatest aid or its greatest difficulty.

In the past, the effect of commercialism has been to bind together the human race into a real economic unity behind its apparent political separativeness. But this was a subconscious unity of inseparable interrelations and of intimate mutual dependence, not any oneness of the spirit or of the conscious organised life. Therefore these interrelations produced at once the necessity of peace and the unavailability of war. Peace was necessary for their normal action, war frightfully perturbatory to their whole system of being. But because the organised units were politically separate and rival nations, their commercial interrelations became relations of rivalry and strife or rather a confused tangle of exchange and interdependence and hostile separatism. Self-defence against each other by a wall of tariffs, a race for closed markets and fields of exploitation, a struggle for place or predominance in markets and fields which could not be monopolised and an attempt at mutual interpenetration in spite of tariff walls have been the chief features of this hostility and this separatism. The outbreak of war under such conditions was only a matter of time; it was bound to come as soon as one nation or else one group of nations felt itself either unable to proceed farther by pacific means or threatened with the definite limitation of its expansion by the growing combination of its rivals. The Franco-German was the last great war dictated by political

motives. Since then the political motive has been mainly a cover for the commercial. Not the political subjugation of Serbia which could only be a fresh embarrassment to the Austrian empire, but the commercial possession of the outlet through Salonika was the motive of Austrian policy. Pan-Germanism covered the longings of German industry for possession of the great resources and the large outlet into the North Sea offered by the countries along the Rhine. To seize African spaces of exploitation and perhaps French coal fields, not to rule over French territory, was the drift of its real intention. In Africa, in China, in Persia, in Mesopotamia, commercial motives determined political and military action. War is no longer the legitimate child of ambition and earth-hunger, but the bastard offspring of wealth-hunger or commercialism with political ambition as its putative father.

On the other hand, the effect, the shock of war have been rendered intolerable by the industrial organisation of human life and the commercial interdependence of the nations. It would be too much to say that it laid that organisation in ruins, but it turned it topsy-turvy, deranged its whole system and diverted it to unnatural ends. And it produced a wide-spread suffering and privation in belligerent and a *gêne* and perturbation of life in neutral countries to which the history of the world offers no parallel. The angry cry that this must not be suffered again and that the authors of this menace and disturbance to the modern industrial organisation of the world, self-styled civilisation, must be visited with condign punishment and remain for some time as international outcasts under a ban and a boycott, showed how deeply the lesson had gone home. But it showed too, as the post-war mentality has shown, that the real, the inner truth of it all has

not yet been understood or not seized at its centre. Certainly, from this point of view also, the prevention of war must be one of the first preoccupations of a new ordering of international life. But how is war to be entirely prevented if the old state of commercial rivalry between politically separate nations is to be perpetuated? If peace is still to be a covert war, an organisation of strife and rivalry, how is the physical shock to be prevented? It may be said, through the regulation of the inevitable strife and rivalry by a state of law as in the competitive commercial life of a nation before the advent of Socialism. But that was only possible, because the competing individuals or combines were part of a single social organism subject to a single governmental authority and unable to assert their individual will of existence against it. Such a regulation between nations can therefore have no other conclusion, logically or practically, than the formation of a centralised World-State.

But let us suppose that the physical shock of war is prevented, not by law, but by the principle of enforced arbitration in extreme cases which might lead to war, not by the creation of an international authority, but by the overhanging threat of international pressure. The state of covert war will still continue; it may even take new and disastrous forms. Deprived of other weapons the nations are bound to have increasing resort to the weapon of commercial pressure, as did Capital and Labour in their chronic state of "pacific" struggle within the limits of the national life. The instruments would be different, but would follow the same principle, that of the strike and the lock-out which are on one side a combined passive resistance by the weaker party to enforce its claims, on the other a passive pressure by the stronger

party to enforce its wishes. Between nations, the corresponding weapon to the strike would be a commercial boycott, already used more than once in an unorganised fashion both in Asia and Europe and bound to be extremely effective and telling if organised even by a politically or commercially weak nation. For the weaker nation is necessary to the stronger, if as nothing else, yet as a market or as a commercial and industrial victim. The corresponding weapons to the lock-out would be the refusal of capital or machinery, the prohibition of all or of any needed imports into the offending or victim country, or even a naval blockade leading, if long maintained, to industrial ruin or to national starvation. The blockade is a weapon used originally only in a state of war, but it was employed against Greece as a substitute for war, and this use may easily be extended in the future. There is always too the weapon of prohibitive tariffs.

It is clear that these weapons need not be employed for commercial purposes or motives only, they may be grasped at to defend or to attack any national interest, to enforce any claim of justice or injustice between nation and nation. It has been shown into how tremendous a weapon commercial pressure can be turned when it is used as an aid to war. If Germany was crushed in the end, the real means of victory was the blockade, the cutting off of money, resources and food and the ruin of industry and commerce. For the military debacle was not directly due to military weakness, but primarily to the diminution and failure of resources, to exhaustion, semi-starvation and the moral depression of an intolerable position cut off from all hope of replenishment and recovery. This lesson also may have in the future considerable application in a time of "peace". Already it was

proposed at one time in some quarters to continue the commercial war after the political had ceased, in order that Germany might not only be struck off the list of great imperial nations but also permanently hampered, disabled or even ruined as a commercial and industrial rival. A policy of refusal of capital and trade relations and a kind of cordon or hostile blockade has been openly advocated and was for a time almost in force against Bolshevik Russia. And it has been suggested too that a League of Peace¹ might use this weapon of commercial pressure against any recalcitrant nation in place of military force.

But so long as there is not a firm international authority, the use of this weapon would not be likely to be limited to such occasions or used only for just and legitimate ends. It might be used by a combination of strong imperial Powers to enforce their selfish and evil will upon the world. Force and coercion of any kind not concentrated in the hands of a just and impartial authority are always liable to abuse and misapplication. Therefore inevitably in the growing unity of mankind the evolution of such an authority must become an early and pressing need. The World-State even in its early and imperfect organisation must begin not only to concentrate military force in its hands, but to commence consciously in the beginning what the national State only arrived at by a slow and natural development, the ordering of the commercial, industrial, economic life of the race and the control at first, no doubt, only of the principal relations of international commerce,² but inevitably in the end of its

¹ Afterwards realised as the League of Nations.

² Some first beginnings of this kind of activity were trying to appear in the activities of the now almost moribund League

WAR AND THE NEED OF ECONOMIC UNITY

whole system and principles. Since industry and trade are now five-sixths of social life and the economic principle the governing principle of society, a World-State which did not control human life in its chief principle and its largest activity would exist only in name.

of Nations. These activities were still only platonic and advisory as in its futile discussions about disarmament and its inconclusive attempts to regulate certain relations of Capital and Labour, but they showed that the need is already felt and were a signpost on the road to the future.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE NEED OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITY

IN almost all current ideas of the first step towards international organisation, it is taken for granted that the nations will continue to enjoy their separate existence and liberties and will only leave to international action the prevention of war, the regulation of dangerous disputes, the power of settling great international questions which they cannot settle by ordinary means. It is impossible that the development should stop there; this first step would necessarily lead to others which could travel only in one direction. Whatever authority were established, if it is to be a true authority in any degree and not a mere concert for palaver, would find itself called upon to act more frequently and to assume always increasing powers. To avoid preventible disturbance and friction, to avert hereafter the recurrence of troubles and disasters which in the beginning the first limitations of its powers had debarred the new authority from exercising by a timely intervention before they came to a head, to bring about a co-ordination of activities for common ends, would be the principal motives impelling humanity to advance from a looser to a closer union, from a voluntary self-subordination in great and exceptional matters to an obligatory subordination in most matters. The desire of powerful nations to use it for their own purposes, the utility for weaker nations of appealing to it for the

THE NEED OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITY

protection of their interests, the shock of actual or threatened internal disturbances and revolutions would all help to give the international authority greater power and provide occasions for extending its normal action. Science, thought and religion, the three great forces which in modern times tend increasingly to override national distinctions and point the race towards unity of life and spirit, would become more impatient of national barriers, hostilities and divisions and lend their powerful influence to the change. The great struggle between Capital and Labour might become rapidly world-wide, arrive at such an international organisation as would precipitate the inevitable step or even present the actual crisis which would bring about the transformation.

Our supposition for the moment is that a well-unified World-State with the nations for its provinces would be the final outcome. At first, taking up the regulation of international disputes and of economic treaties and relations, the international authority would start as an arbiter and an occasional executive power and change by degrees into a legislative body and a standing executive power. Its legislation would be absolutely necessary in international matters, if fresh convulsions are to be avoided; for it is idle to suppose that any international arrangement, any ordering of the world arrived at after the close of a great war and upheaval could be permanent and definitive. Injustice, inequalities, abnormalities, causes of quarrel or dissatisfaction would remain in the relations of nation with nation, continent with continent which would lead to fresh hostilities and explosions. As these are prevented in the nation-State by the legislative authority which constantly modifies the existing system of things in conformity with new ideas, interests,

forces and necessities, so it would have to be in the developing World-State. This legislative power as it developed, extended, regularised its actions, powers and processes, would become more complex and would be bound to interfere at many points and override or substitute its own for the separate national action. That would imply the growth also of its executive power and the development of an international executive organisation. At first it might confine itself to the most important questions and affairs which obviously demanded its control; but it would tend increasingly to stretch its hand to all or most matters that could be viewed as having an international effect and importance. Before long it would invade and occupy even those fields in which the nations are now jealous of their own rights and power. And eventually it would permeate the whole system of the national life and subject it to international control in the interests of the better co-ordination of the united life, culture, science, organisation, education, efficiency of the human race. It would reduce the now free and separate nations first to the position of the States of the American Union or the German Empire and eventually perhaps to that of geographical provinces or departments of the single nation of mankind.

The present obstacle to any such extreme consummation is the still strong principle of nationalism, the sense of group separateness, the instinct of collective independence, its pride, its pleasure in itself, its various sources of egoistic self-satisfaction, its insistence on the subordination of the human idea to the national idea. But we are supposing that the new-born idea of internationalism will grow apace, subject to itself the past idea and temper of nationalism, become dominant and take possession of the

human mind. As the larger nation-group has subordinated to itself and tended to absorb all smaller clan, tribal and regional groups, as the larger empire group now tends to subordinate and might, if allowed to develop, eventually absorb the smaller nation-groups, we are supposing that the complete human group of united mankind will subordinate to itself in the same way and eventually absorb all smaller groups of separated humanity. It is only by a growth of the international idea, the idea of a single humanity, that nationalism can disappear, if the old natural device of an external unification by conquest or other compulsive force continues to be no longer possible; for the methods of war have become too disastrous and no single empire has the means and the strength to overcome, whether rapidly or in the gradual Roman way, the rest of the world. Undoubtedly, nationalism is a more powerful obstacle to farther unification than was the separativeness of the old pettier and less firmly self-conscious groupings which preceded the developed nation-State. It is still the most powerful sentiment in the collective human mind, still gives an indestructible vitality to the nation and is apt to reappear even where it seemed to have been abolished. But we cannot argue safely from the present balance of tendencies in the beginning of a great era of transitions. Already there are at work not only ideas but forces, all the more powerful for being forces of the future and not established powers of the present, which may succeed in subordinating nationalism to themselves far earlier than we can at present conceive.

If the principle of the World-State is carried to its logical conclusion and to its extreme consequences, the result will be a process analogous, in principle, with whatever

necessary differences in the manner or form or extent of execution, to that by which in the building of the nation-State the central government, first as a monarchy, then as a democratic assembly and executive, gathered up the whole administration of the national life. There will be a centralisation of all control, military and police, administrative, judicial, legislative, economic, social and cultural in the one international authority. The spirit of the centralisation will be a strong unitarian idea and the principle of uniformity enforced for the greatest practical convenience and the result a rationalised mechanism of human life and activities throughout the world with justice, universal well-being, economy of effort and scientific efficiency as its principal objects. Instead of the individual activities of nation-groups each working for itself with the maximum of friction and waste and conflict, there will be an effort at co-ordination such as we now see in a well-organised modern State, of which the complete idea is a thorough-going State socialism, nowhere yet realised indeed, but rapidly coming into existence.¹ If we glance briefly at each department of the communal activity, we shall see that this development is inevitable.

We have seen already that all military power—and in the World-State that would mean an international armed police—must be concentrated in the hands of one common authority; otherwise the State cannot

¹ Since this was written, this coming into existence has become much more rapid and thorough-going in three at least of the greatest nations and a more hesitating and less clearly self-conscious imitation of it is in evidence in smaller countries.

endure. A certain concentration of the final power of decision in economic matters would be also in time inevitable. And in the end this supremacy could not stop short of a complete control. For, the economic life of the world is becoming more and more one and indivisible; but the present state of international relations is an anomalous condition of opposite principles partly in conflict, partly accommodated to each other as best they can be,—but the best is bad and harmful to the common interest. On the one side, there is the underlying unity which makes each nation commercially dependent on all the rest. On the other, there is the spirit of national jealousy, egoism and sense of separate existence which makes each nation attempt at once to assert its industrial independence and at the same time reach out for a hold of its outgoing commercial activities upon foreign markets. The interaction of these two principles is regulated at present partly by the permitted working of natural forces, partly by tacit practice and understanding, partly by systems of tariff protection, bounties, State aid of one kind or another on the one hand and commercial treaties and agreements on the other. Inevitably, as the World-State grew, this would be felt to be an anomaly, a wasteful and uneconomical process. An efficient international authority would be compelled more and more to intervene and modify the free arrangements of nation with nation. The commercial interests of humanity at large would be given the first place; the independent proclivities and commercial ambitions or jealousies of this and that nation would be compelled to subordinate themselves to the human good. The ideal of mutual exploitation would be replaced by the ideal of a fit and proper share in the united economic life

of the race. Especially, as socialism advanced and began to regulate the whole economic existence of separate countries, the same principle would gain ground in the international field and in the end the World-State would be called upon to take up into its hands the right ordering of the industrial production and distribution of the world. Each country might be allowed for a time to produce its own absolute necessities: but in the end it would probably be felt that this was no more necessary than for Wales or Scotland to produce all its own necessities independently of the rest of the British Isles or for one province of India to be an economic unit independent of the rest of the country; each would produce and distribute only what it could to the best advantage, most naturally, most efficiently and most economically,³ for the common need and demand of mankind in which its own would be inseparably included. It would do this according to a system settled by the common will of mankind through its State government and under a method made uniform in its principles, however variable in local detail, so as to secure the simplest, smoothest and most rational working of a necessarily complicated machinery.

The administration of the general order of society is a less pressing matter of concern than it was to the nation-States in their period of formation, because those were times when the element of order had almost to be created and violence, crime and revolt were both more easy and more a natural and general propensity of mankind. At the present day, not only are societies tolerably well-organised in this respect and equipped with the absolutely necessary agreements between country and country, but by an elaborate system

of national, regional and municipal governments linked up by an increasingly rapid power of communication; the State can regulate parts of the order of life with which the cruder governments of old were quite unable to deal with any full effect. In the World-State, it may be thought, each country may be left to its own free action in matters of its internal order, and, indeed, of all its separate political, social and cultural life. But even here it is probable that the World-State would demand a greater centralisation and uniformity than we can now easily imagine.

In the matter, for instance, of the continual struggle of society with the still ineradicable element of crime which it generates in its own bosom, the crudity of the present system is sure to be recognised and a serious attempt made to deal with it in a very radical manner. The first necessity would be the close observation and supervision of the great mass of constantly re-created corrupt human material in which the bacillus of crime finds its natural breeding-ground. This is at present done very crudely and imperfectly and, for the most part, after the event of actual crime by the separate police of each nation with extradition treaties and informal mutual aid as a device against evasion by place-shift. The World-State would insist on an international as well as a local supervision, not only to deal with the phenomenon of what may be called international crime and disorder which is likely to increase largely under future conditions, but for the more important object of the prevention of crime.

For the second necessity it would feel would be the need to deal with crime at its roots and in its inception. It may attempt this, first, by a more enlightened method

of education and moral and temperamental training which would render the growth of criminal propensities more difficult; secondly, by scientific or eugenic methods of observation, treatment, isolation, perhaps sterilisation of corrupt human material; thirdly, by a humane and enlightened gaol system and penological method which would have for its aim not the punishment but the reform of the incipient and the formed criminal. It would insist on a certain uniformity of principle so that there might not be countries that would persevere in backward and old-world or inferior or erratic systems and so defeat the general object. For this end centralisation of control would be necessary or at least strongly advisable. So too with the judicial method. The present system is still considered as enlightened and civilised, and it is so comparatively with the mediaeval methods; but a time will surely come when it will be condemned as grotesque, inefficient, irrational and in many of its principal features semi-barbaric, a half-conversion at most of the more confused and arbitrary methods of an earlier state of social thought and feeling and social life. With the development of a more rational system, the preservation of the old juridical and judicial principles and methods in any part of the world would be felt to be intolerable and the World-State would be led to standardise the new principles and the new methods by a common legislation and probably a general centralised control.

In all these matters, it might be admitted, uniformity and centralisation would be beneficial and to some extent inevitable; no jealousy of national separateness and independence could be allowed under such conditions to interfere with the common good of humanity.

But at least in the choice of their political system and in other spheres of their social life the nations might well be left to follow their own ideals and propensities and to be healthily and naturally free. It may even be said that the nations would never tolerate any serious interference in these matters and that the attempt to use the World-State for such a purpose would be fatal to its existence. But, as a matter of fact, the principle of political non-interference is likely to be much less admitted in the future than it has been in the past or is at present. Always in times of great and passionate struggle between conflicting political ideas,—between oligarchy and democracy in ancient Greece, between the old regime and the ideas of the French Revolution in modern Europe,—the principle of political non-interference has gone to the wall. But now we see another phenomenon—the opposite principle of interference slowly erecting itself into a conscious rule of international life. There is more and more possible an intervention like the American interference in Cuba, not on avowed grounds of national interest, but ostensibly on behalf of liberty, constitutionalism and democracy, or of an opposite social and political principle, on international grounds therefore and practically in the force of this idea that the internal arrangements of a country concern, under certain conditions of disorder or insufficiency, not only itself, but its neighbours and humanity at large. A similar principle was put forward by the Allies in regard to Greece during the war. It was applied to one of the most powerful nations of the world in the refusal of the Allies to treat with Germany or, practically, to re-admit it into the comity of nations unless it set aside its existing political system and principles and adopted the forms of

modern democracy, dismissing all remnant of absolutist rule.¹

This idea of the common interest of the race in the internal affairs of a nation is bound to increase as the life of humanity becomes more unified. The great political question of the future is likely to be the challenge of Socialism, the full evolution of the omnipotent State. And if Socialism triumphs in the leading nations of the world, it will inevitably seek to impose its rule everywhere not only by indirect pressure, but even by direct interference in what it would consider backward countries. An international authority, Parliamentary or other, in which it commanded the majority or the chief influence, would be too ready a means to be neglected. Moreover, a World-State would probably no more find it possible to tolerate the continuance of certain nations as capitalist societies, itself being socialistic in major part, than a capitalist or socialist Great Britain would tolerate a socialist or capitalist Scotland or Wales. On the other hand, if all nations become socialistic in form, it would be natural enough for the World-State to co-ordinate all these separate socialisms into one great system of human life. But Socialism pursued to its full development means the destruction of the distinction between political and social activities; it means the socialisation of the common life

¹ The hardly disguised intervention of the Fascist Powers in Spain to combat and beat down the democratic Government of the country is a striking example of what is likely to increase in the future. Since then there has been the interference in an opposite sense with the Franco regime in the same country and the pressure put upon it, however incomplete and wavering, to change its method and principle.

and its subjection in all its parts to its own organised government and administration. Nothing small or great escapes its purview. Birth and marriage, labour and amusement and rest, education, culture, training of physique and character, the socialistic sense leaves nothing outside its scope and its busy intolerant control. Therefore, granting an international Socialism, neither the politics nor the social life of the separate peoples is likely to escape the centralised control of the World-State.¹

Such a world-system is remote indeed from our present conceptions and established habits of life, but these conceptions and habits are already subjected at their roots to powerful forces of change. Uniformity is becoming more and more the law of the world; it is becoming more and more difficult, in spite of sentiment and in spite of conscious efforts of conservation and revival, for local individualities to survive. But the triumph of uniformity would naturally make for centralisation; the radical incentive to separateness would disappear. And centralisation once accomplished would in its turn make for a more complete uniformity. Such decentralisation as might be indispensable in a uniform humanity would be needed for convenience of administration, not on the ground of true separative variations. Once the national sentiment has gone under before a dominant internationalism, large questions of culture and race would be the only

¹ This aspect of Socialism in action has received a striking confirmation in the trend to total governmental control in Germany and Italy. The strife between national (Fascist) Socialism and pure Marxist Socialism could not have been foreseen at the time of writing; but whichever form prevails, there is an identical principle.

grounds left for the preservation of a strong, though subordinate, principle of separation in the World-State. But difference of culture is quite as much threatened today as any other more outward principle of group variation. The differences between the European nations are simply minor variations of a common occidental culture. And now that Science, that great power for uniformity of thought and life and method, is becoming more and more the greater part and threatens to become the whole of culture and life, the importance of these variations is likely to decrease. The only radical difference that still exists is between the mind of the Occident and the mind of the Orient. But here too Asia is undergoing the shock of Europeanism and Europe is beginning to feel, however slightly, the reflux of Asiaticism. A common world-culture is the most probable outcome. The valid objection to centralisation will then be greatly diminished in force, if not removed altogether. Race-sense is perhaps a stronger obstacle because it is more irrational; but this too may be removed by the closer intellectual, cultural and physical intercourse which is inevitable in the not distant future.

The dream of the cosmopolitan socialist thinker may therefore be realised after all. And given the powerful continuance of the present trend of world-forces, it is in a way inevitable. Even what seems now most a chimera, a common language, may become a reality. For a State naturally tends to establish one language as the instrument of all its public affairs, its thought, its literature; the rest sink into patois, dialects, provincial tongues, like Welsh in Great Britain or Breton and Provençal in France; exceptions like Switzerland are few, hardly more than one or two in number, and are preserved only by unusually favourable

THE NEED OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITY

conditions. It is difficult indeed to suppose that languages with powerful literatures spoken by millions of cultured men will allow themselves to be put into a quite secondary position, much less snuffed out by any old or new speech of man. But it cannot be quite certainly said that scientific reason, taking possession of the mind of the race and thrusting aside separative sentiment as a barbaric anachronism, may not accomplish one day even this psychological miracle. In any case, variety of language need be no insuperable obstacle to uniformity of culture, to uniformity of education, life and organisation or to a regulating scientific machinery applied to all departments of life and settled for the common good by the united will and intelligence of the human race. For that would be what a World-State, such as we have imagined, would stand for, its meaning, its justification, its human object. It is likely indeed that this and nothing less would come in the end to be regarded as the full justification of its existence.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PERIL OF THE WORLD-STATE

THIS then is the extreme possible form of a World-State, the form dreamed of by the socialistic, scientific, humanitarian thinkers who represent the modern mind at its highest point of self-consciousness and are therefore able to detect the trend of its tendencies, though to the half-rationalised mind of the ordinary man whose view does not go beyond the day and its immediate morrow, their speculations may seem to be chimerical and utopian. In reality they are nothing of the kind; in their essence, not necessarily in their form, they are, as we have seen, not only the logical outcome, but the inevitable practical last end of the incipient urge towards human unity, if it is pursued by a principle of mechanical unification, —that is to say, by the principle of the State. It is for this reason that we have found it necessary to show the operative principles and necessities which have underlain the growth of the unified and finally socialistic nation-State, in order to see how the same movement in international unification must lead to the same results by an analogous necessity of development. The State principle leads necessarily to uniformity, regulation, mechanisation; its inevitable end is socialism. There is nothing fortuitous, no room for chance in political and social development, and the emergence of socialism was no accident or a thing that might or might not have been, but the

inevitable result contained in the very seed of the State idea. It was inevitable from the moment that idea began to be hammered out in practice. The work of the Alfreds and Charlemagnes and other premature national or imperial unifiers contained this as a sure result, for men work almost always without knowing for what they have worked. But in modern times the signs are so clear that we need not be deceived or imagine, when we begin to lay a mechanical base for world-unification, that the result contained in the very effort will not insist on developing, however far-off it may seem at present from any immediate or even any distant possibilities. A strict unification, a vast uniformity, a regulated socialisation of united mankind will be the predestined fruit of our labour.

This result can only be avoided if an opposite force interposes and puts in its veto, as happened in Asia where the State idea, although strongly affirmed within its limits, could never go in its realisation beyond a certain point, because the fundamental principle of the national life was opposed to its full intolerant development. The races of Asia, even the most organised, have always been peoples rather than nations in the modern sense. Or they were nations only in the sense of having a common soul-life, a common culture, a common social organisation, a common political head, but not nation-States. The State machine existed only for a restricted and superficial action; the real life of the people was determined by other powers with which it could not meddle. Its principal function was to preserve and protect the national culture and to maintain sufficient political, social and administrative order—as far as possible an immutable order—for the real life of the people to function undisturbed in its own way and according to

its own innate tendencies. Some such unity for the human race is possible in the place of an organised World-State, if the nations of mankind succeed in preserving their developed instinct of nationalism intact and strong enough to resist the domination of the State idea. The result would then be not a single nation of mankind and a World-State, but a single human people with a free association of its nation-units. Or, it may be, the nation as we know it might disappear, but there would be some other new kind of group-units, assured by some sufficient machinery of international order in the peaceful and natural functioning of their social, economical and cultural relations.

Which then of these two major possibilities would be preferable? To answer that question we have to ask ourselves, what would be the account of gain and loss for the life of the human race which would result from the creation of a unified World-State. In all probability the results would be, with all allowance for the great difference between then and now, very much the same in essence as those which we observe in the ancient Roman Empire. On the credit side, we should have first one enormous gain, the assured peace of the world. It might not be absolutely secure against internal shocks and disturbances but, supposing certain outstanding questions to be settled with some approach to permanence, it would eliminate even such occasional violences of civil strife as disturbed the old Roman imperial economy and, whatever perturbations there might still be, need not disturb the settled fabric of civilisation so as to cast all again into the throes of a great radical and violent change. Peace assured, there would be an unparalleled development of ease and well-being. A great

number of outstanding problems would be solved by the united intelligence of mankind working no longer in fragments but as one. The vital life of the race would settle down into an assured rational order comfortable, well-regulated, well-informed, with a satisfactory machinery for meeting all difficulties, exigencies and problems with the least possible friction, disturbance and mere uncertainty of adventure and peril. At first, there would be a great cultural and intellectual efflorescence. Science would organise itself for the betterment of human life and the increase of knowledge and mechanical efficiency. The various cultures of the world—those that still exist as separate realities—would not only exchange ideas more intimately, but would throw their gains into one common fund, and new motives and forms would arise for a time in thought and literature and Art. Men would meet each other much more closely and completely than before, develop a greater mutual understanding rid of many accidental motives of strife, hatred and repugnance which now exist, and arrive, if not at brotherhood,—which cannot come by mere political, social and cultural union,—yet at some imitation of it, a sufficiently kindly association and interchange. There would be an unprecedented splendour, ease and amenity in this development of human life, and no doubt some chief poet of the age, writing in the common or official tongue—shall we say, Esperanto?—would sing confidently of the approach of the golden age or even proclaim its actual arrival and eternal duration. But after a time, there would be a dying down of force, a static condition of the human mind and human life, then stagnation, decay, disintegration. The soul of man would begin to wither in the midst of his acquisitions.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

This result would come about for the same essential reasons as in the Roman example. The conditions of a vigorous life would be lost, liberty, mobile variation and the shock upon each other of freely developing differentiated lives. It may be said that this will not happen, because the World-State will be a free democratic State, not a liberty-stifling empire or autocracy, and because liberty and progress are the very principle of modern life and no development would be tolerated which went contrary to that principle. But in all this, there is not really the security that seems to be offered. For what is now, need not endure under quite different circumstances and the idea that it will is a strange mirage thrown from the actualities of the present on the possibly quite different actualities of the future. Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and of excitement, often in the forms of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar

phrase and its deadening effects have been depicted with a great force of resentment by certain of the modern intellectuals;¹ but what the future promises us is something more formidable still, the tyranny of the whole, of the self-hypnotised mass over its constituent groups and units.²

This is a very remarkable development, the more so, as in the origins of the democratic movement individual freedom was the ideal which it set in front both in ancient and modern times. The Greeks associated democracy with two main ideas, first, an effective and personal share by each citizen in the actual government, legislation, administration of the community, secondly, a great freedom of individual temperament and action. But neither of these characteristics can flourish in the modern type of democracy, although in the United States of America there was at one time a tendency to a certain extent in this direction. In large States, the personal share of each citizen in the government cannot be effective; he can only have an equal share—illusory for the individual although effective in the mass—in the periodical choice of his legislators and administrators. Even if these have not practically to be elected from a class which is not the whole or even the majority of the community, at present almost everywhere the middle class, still these legislators and administrators

¹ Ibsen in his drama, "An Enemy of the People".

² There was first seen the drastic beginning of this phenomenon in Fascist Italy and Soviet Russia. At the time of writing this development could be seen only in speculative prevision. It assumed afterwards the proportions of a growing fact and we can now see its full and formidable body.

do not really represent their electors. The Power they represent is another, a formless and bodiless entity, which has taken the place of monarch and aristocracy, that impersonal group-being which assumes some sort of outward form and body and conscious action in the huge mechanism of the modern State. Against this power the individual is much more helpless than he was against old oppressions. When he feels its pressure grinding him into its uniform moulds, he has no resource except either an impotent anarchism or else a retreat, still to some extent possible, into the freedom of his soul or the freedom of his intellectual being.

For this is one gain of modern democracy which ancient liberty did not realise to the same extent and which has not yet been renounced, a full freedom of speech and thought. And as long as this freedom endures, the fear of a static condition of humanity and subsequent stagnation might seem to be groundless,—especially when it is accompanied by universal education which provides the largest possible human field for producing an effectuating force. Freedom of thought and speech—the two necessarily go together, since there can be no real freedom of thought where a padlock is put upon freedom of speech—is not indeed complete without freedom of association; for free speech means free propagandism and propagandism only becomes effective by association for the realisation of its objects. This the third liberty also exists with more or less of qualifying limitations or prudent safeguards in all democratic States. But it is a question whether these great fundamental liberties have been won by the race with an entire security,—apart from their occasional

suspensions even in the free nations and the considerable restrictions with which they are hedged in subject countries. It is possible that the future has certain surprises for us in this direction.¹ Freedom of thought would be the last human liberty directly attacked by the all-regulating State, which will first seek to regulate the whole life of the individual in the type approved by the communal mind or by its rules. But when it sees how all-important is the thought in shaping the life, it will be led to take hold of that too by forming the thought of the individual through State education and by training him to the acceptance of the approved-communal, ethical, social, religious ideas, as was done in many ancient forms of education. Only if it finds this weapon ineffective, is it likely to limit freedom of thought directly on the plea of danger to the State and to civilisation. Already we see the right of the State to interfere with individual thought announced here and there in a most ominous manner. One would have imagined religious liberty at least was assured to mankind; but recently we have seen an exponent of "new thought advancing positively the doctrine that the State is under no obligation to recognise thought; it can only be conceded as a matter of expediency, not of right". There is no obligation, it is contended, to allow freedom of cult; and indeed this seems logical; for if the State has the right to regulate the whole life of the individual, it must surely have the right to regulate his religion, which is so important a part of his life,

¹ A surprise no longer, but more and more an accomplished fact. At this moment freedom of speech and thought exists no longer in Russia; it was entirely suspended for a time in Germany and Southern Europe.

and his thought, which has so powerful an effect upon his life.¹

Supposing an all-regulating socialistic World-State to be established, the freedom of thought under such a regime would necessarily mean a criticism not only of the details, but of the very principles of the existing state of things. This criticism, if it is to look not to the dead past but to the future, could only take one direction, the direction of anarchism, whether of the spiritual Tolstoian kind or else the intellectual anarchism which is now the creed of a small minority but still a growing force in many European countries. It would declare the free development of the individual as its gospel and denounce government as an evil and no longer at all a necessary evil. It would affirm the full and free religious, ethical, intellectual and temperamental growth of the individual from within as the true ideal of human life and all else as things not worth having at the price of the renunciation of this ideal, a renunciation which it would describe as the loss of his soul. It would preach as the ideal of society a free association or brotherhood of individuals without government or any kind of compulsion.

What would the World-State do with this kind of free thought? It might tolerate it so long as it did not translate itself into individual and associated action; but the moment it spread or turned towards a practical self-

¹ It was an error of prevision to suppose that the State would hesitate for a time to suppress freedom of thought altogether. It has been done at once and decisively by Bolshevist Russia and the totalitarian States. Religious liberty is not yet utterly destroyed, but is being sternly ground out in Russia, as it was in Germany, by State pressure.

affirmation in life, the whole principle of the State and its existence would be attacked and its very base would be sapped and undermined and in imminent danger. To stop the destruction at its root or else consent to its own subversion would be the only alternatives before the established Power. But even before any such necessity arises, the principle of regulation of all things by the State would have extended itself to the regulation of the mental as well as the physical life of man by the communal mind, which was the ideal of former civilisations. A static order of society would be the necessary consequence, since without the freedom of the individual a society cannot remain progressive. It must settle into the rut or the groove of a regulated perfection or of something to which it gives that name because of the rationality of system and symmetrical idea of order which it embodies. The communal mass is always conservative and static in its consciousness and only moves slowly in the tardy process of subconscious Nature. The free individual is the conscious progressive: it is only when he is able to impart his own creative and mobile consciousness to the mass that a progressive society becomes possible.

CHAPTER XXVIII

DIVERSITY IN ONENESS

It is essential to keep constantly in view the fundamental powers and realities of life if we are not to be betrayed by the arbitrary rule of the logical reason and its attachment to the rigorous and limiting idea into experiments which, however convenient in practice and however captivating to a unitarian and symmetrical thought, may well destroy the vigour and impoverish the roots of life. For that which is perfect and satisfying to the system of the logical reason may yet ignore the truth of life and the living needs of the race. Unity is an idea which is not at all arbitrary or unreal; for unity is the very basis of existence. The oneness that is secretly at the foundation of all things, the evolving spirit in Nature is moved to realise consciously at the top; the evolution moves through diversity, from a simple to a complex oneness. Unity the race moves towards and must one day realise.

But uniformity is not the law of life. Life exists by diversity; it insists that every group, every being shall be, even while one with all the rest in its universality, yet by some principle or ordered detail of variation unique. The overcentralisation which is the condition of a working uniformity, is not the healthy method of life. Order is indeed the law of life, but not an artificial regulation. The sound order is that which comes from within, as the result of a nature that has discovered and found its own

law and the law of its relations with others. Therefore the truest order is that which is founded on the greatest possible liberty; for liberty is at once the condition of vigorous variation and the condition of self-finding. Nature secures variation by division into groups and insists on liberty by the force of individuality in the members of the group. Therefore the unity of the human race to be entirely sound and in consonance with the deepest laws of life must be founded on free groupings, and the groupings again must be the natural association of free individuals. This is an ideal which it is certainly impossible to realise under present conditions or perhaps in any near future of the human race; but it is an ideal which ought to be kept in view, for the more we can approximate to it, the more we can be sure of being on the right road. The artificiality of much in human life is the cause of its most deep-seated maladies; it is not faithful to itself or sincere with Nature and therefore it stumbles and suffers.

The utility, the necessity of natural groupings may be seen if we consider the purpose and functioning of one great principle of division in Nature, her insistence on diversity of language. The seeking for a common language for all mankind was very strong at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century and gave rise to several experiments, none of which could get to any vital permanence. Now whatever may be the need of a common medium of communication for mankind and however it may be served by the general use either of an artificial and conventional language or of some natural tongue, as Latin, and later on to a slight extent French, was for some time the common cultural tongue of intercourse between the European nations or Sanskrit for the Indian peoples, no unification which destroyed or overshadowed,

dwarfed and discouraged the large and free use of the varying natural languages of humanity, could fail to be detrimental to human life and progress. The legend of the Tower of Babel speaks of the diversity of tongues as a curse laid on the race; but whatever its disadvantages, and they tend more and more to be minimised by the growth of civilisation and increasing intercourse, it has been rather a blessing than a curse, a gift to mankind rather than a disability laid upon it. The purposeless exaggeration of anything is always an evil, and an excessive pullulation of varying tongues that serve no purpose in the expression of a real diversity of spirit and culture is certainly a stumbling-block rather than a help; but this excess, though it existed in the past,¹ is hardly a possibility of the future. The tendency is rather in the opposite direction. In former times diversity of language helped to create a barrier to knowledge and sympathy, was often made the pretext even of an actual antipathy and tended to a too rigid division. The lack of sufficient interpenetration kept up both a passive want of understanding and a fruitful crop of active misunderstandings. But this was an inevitable evil of a particular stage of growth, an exaggeration of the necessity that then existed for the vigorous development of strongly individualised group-souls in the human race. These disadvantages have not yet been abolished, but with closer intercourse and the growing desire of men and nations for the knowledge of each other's thought and spirit and personality, they have diminished

¹ In India the pedants enumerate I know not how many hundred languages. This is a stupid mis-statement; there are about a dozen great tongues; the rest are either dialects or aboriginal survivals of tribal speech that are bound to disappear.

and tend to diminish more and more and there is no reason why in the end they should not become inoperative.

Diversity of language serves two important ends of the human spirit, a use of unification and a use of variation. A language helps to bring those who speak it into a certain large unity of growing thought, formed temperament, ripening spirit. It is an intellectual, aesthetic and expressive bond which tempers division where division exists and strengthens unity where unity has been achieved. Especially it gives self-consciousness to national or racial unity and creates the bond of a common self-expression and a common record of achievement. On the other hand, it is a means of national differentiation and perhaps the most powerful of all, not a barren principle of division merely, but a fruitful and helpful differentiation. For each language is the sign and power of the soul of the people which naturally speaks it. Each develops therefore its own peculiar spirit, thought-temperament, way of dealing with life and knowledge and experience. If it receives and welcomes the thought, the life-experience, the spiritual impact of other nations, still it transforms them into something new of its own and by that power of transmutation it enriches the life of humanity with its fruitful borrowings and does not merely repeat what had been gained elsewhere. Therefore it is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul, to preserve its language and to make of it a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language, cannot live its whole life or its real life. And this advantage to the national life is at the same time an advantage to the general life of the human race.

How much a distinct human group loses by not possessing a separate tongue of its own or by exchanging its

national self-expression for an alien form of speech can be seen by the examples of the British colonies, the United States of America and Ireland. The colonies are really separate peoples in the psychological sense, although they are not as yet separate nations. English, for the most part or at the lowest in great part, in their origin and political and social sympathy, they are yet not replicas of England, but have already a different temperament, a bent of their own, a developing special character. But this new personality can only appear in the more outward and mechanical parts of their life and even there in no great, effective and fruitful fashion. The British colonies do not count in the culture of the world, because they have no native culture, because by the fact of their speech they are and must be mere provinces of England. Whatever peculiarities they may develop in their mental life tend to create a type of provincialism and not a central intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual life of their own with its distinct importance for mankind. For the same reason the whole of America, in spite of its powerfully independent political and economic being, has tended to be culturally a province of Europe, the south and centre by their dependence on the Spanish, and the north by its dependence on the English language. The life of the United States alone tends and strives to become a great and separate cultural existence, but its success is not commensurate with its power. Culturally, it is still to a great extent a province of England. Neither its literature, in spite of two or three great names, nor its art nor its thought, nor anything else on the higher levels of the mind, has been able to arrive at a vigorous maturity independent in its soul-type. And this because its instrument of self-expression, the language which the national

mind ought to shape and be in turn shaped by it, was formed and must continue to be formed by another country with a different mentality and must there find its centre and its law of development. In old times, America would have evolved and changed the English language according to its own needs until it became a new speech, as the mediaeval nations dealt with Latin and arrived in this way at a characteristic instrument of self-expression; but under modern conditions this is not easily possible.¹

Ireland had its own tongue when it had its own free nationality and culture and its loss was a loss to humanity as well as to the Irish nation. For what might not this Celtic race with its fine psychic turn and quick intelligence and delicate imagination, which did so much in the beginning for European culture and religion, have given to the world through all these centuries under natural conditions? But the forcible imposition of a foreign tongue and the turning of a nation into a province left Ireland for so many centuries mute and culturally stagnant, a dead force in the life of Europe. Nor can we count as an adequate compensation for this loss the small indirect influence of the race upon English culture or the few direct contributions made by gifted Irishmen forced to pour their natural genius into a foreign mould of thought.

¹ It is affirmed that now such an independent development is taking place in America; it has to be seen how far this becomes a truly vigorous reality: at present it has amounted only to a provincial turn, a sort of national slang or a racy oddity. Even in the farthest development it would only be a sort of dialect, not a national language.

Even when Ireland in her struggle for freedom was striving to recover her free soul and give it a voice, she has been hampered by having to use a tongue which does not naturally express her spirit and peculiar bent. In time she may conquer the obstacle, make this tongue her own, force it to express her, but it will be long, if ever, before she can do it with the same richness, force and unfettered individuality as she would have done in her Gaelic speech. That speech she had tried to recover but the natural obstacles have been and are likely always to be too heavy and too strongly established for any complete success in that endeavour.

Modern India is another striking example. Nothing has stood in the way of the rapid progress in India, nothing has more successfully prevented her self-finding and development under modern conditions than the long overshadowing of the Indian tongues as cultural instruments by the English language. It is significant that the one sub-nation in India which from the first refused to undergo this yoke, devoted itself to the development of its language, made that for long its principal preoccupation, gave to it its most original minds and most living energies, getting through everything else perfunctorily, neglecting commerce, doing politics as an intellectual and oratorical pastime,—that it is Bengal which first recovered its soul, re-spiritualised itself, forced the whole world to hear of its great spiritual personalities, gave it the first modern Indian poet and Indian scientist of world-wide fame and achievement, restored the moribund art of India to life and power, first made her count again in the culture of the world, first, as a reward in the outer life, arrived at a vital political consciousness and a living political movement not imitative and derivative in its spirit

and its central ideal.¹ For so much does language count in the life of a nation; for so much does it count to the advantage of humanity at large that its group-souls should preserve and develop and use with a vigorous group-individuality their natural instrument of expression.

A common language makes for unity and therefore it might be said that the unity of the human race demands unity of language; the advantages of diversity must be foregone for this greater good, however serious the temporary sacrifice. But it makes for a real, fruitful, living unity, only when it is the natural expression of the race or has been made natural by a long adaptation and development from within. The history of universal tongues spoken by peoples to whom they were not natural, is not encouraging. Always they have tended to become dead tongues, sterilising so long as they kept their hold, fruitful only when they were decomposed and broken up into new derivative languages or departed leaving the old speech, where that still persisted, to revive with this new stamp and influence upon it. Latin, after its first century of general domination in the West, became a dead thing, impotent for creation, and generated no new or living and evolving culture in the nations that spoke it; even so great a force as Christianity could not give it a new life. The times during which it was an instrument of European thought, were precisely those in which that thought was heaviest, most traditional and least fruitful. A rapid and vigorous new life only grew up when the languages which appeared out of the detritus of dying Latin or the old languages which had not been lost took

¹ Now, of course, everything has changed and these remarks are no longer applicable to the actual state of things in India.

its place as the complete instruments of national culture. For it is not enough that the natural language should be spoken by the people; it must be the expression of its higher life and thought. A language that survives only as a patois or a provincial tongue like Welsh after the English conquest or Breton or Provençal in France or as Czech survived once in Austria or Ruthenian and Lithuanian in imperial Russia, languishes, becomes sterile and does not serve all the true purpose of survival.

Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized, more than in mere outward things; but these truths are important because they apply equally to the thing which it expresses and symbolises and serves as an instrument. Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation. The disappearance of national variation into a single uniform human unity, of which the systematic thinker dreams as an ideal and which we have seen to be a substantial possibility and even a likelihood, if a certain tendency becomes dominant, might lead to political peace, economic well-being, perfect administration, the solution of a hundred material problems, as did on a lesser scale the Roman unity in old times; but to what eventual good if it leads also to an uncreative sterilisation of the mind and the stagnation of the soul of the race? In laying this stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit there need be no intention of

undervaluing the outward material side of life; it is not at all my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. For we see that in the life of a nation a great period of national culture and vigorous mental and soul life is always part of a general stirring and movement which has its counterpart in the outward political, economic and practical life of the nation. The culture brings about or increases the material progress but also it needs it that it may itself flourish with an entirely full and healthy vigour. The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world-culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being, freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual. Not then a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future.

But how is this difficult end to be secured? For if an excessive uniformity and centralisation tends to the disappearance of necessary variations and indispensable liberties, a vigorous diversity and strong group-individualism may lead to an incurable persistence or constant return of the old separatism which will prevent human unity from reaching completeness or even will not allow it to take firm root. For it will not be enough for the constituent groups or divisions to have a certain formal

administrative and legislative separateness like the States of the American union if, as there, there is liberty only in mechanical variations and all vivid departures from the general norm proceeding from a profounder inner variation are discouraged or forbidden. Nor will it be sufficient to found a unity plus local independence of the German type; for there the real overriding force was a unifying and disciplined Prussianism and independence survived only in form. Nor will even the English colonial system give us any useful suggestion; for there is there local independence and a separate vigour of life, but the brain, heart and central spirit are in the metropolitan country and the rest are at the best only outlying posts of the Anglo-Saxon idea.¹ The Swiss cantonal life offers no fruitful similitude; for, apart from the exiguity of its proportions and frame, there is the phenomenon of a single Swiss life and practical spirit with a mental dependence on three foreign cultures sharply dividing the race; a common Swiss culture does not exist. The problem is rather, on a larger and more difficult scale and with greater complexities, that which offered itself for a moment to the British Empire, how if it is at all possible to unite Great Britain, Ireland, the Colonies, Egypt, India in a real oneness, throw their gains into a common stock, use their energies for a common end, help them to find the account of their national individuality in a supranational life, yet preserve that individuality,—Ireland keeping the Irish soul and life and cultural principle, India the Indian soul and life and cultural principle, the other units developing theirs, not united by a common

¹ This may be less so than before, but the improvement does not go very far.

Anglicisation, which was the past empire-building ideal, but held together by a greater as yet unrealised principle of free union. Nothing was suggested at any time in the way of a solution except some sort of bunch or rather bouquet system, unifying its clusters not by the living stalk of a common origin or united past, for that does not exist, but by an artificial thread of administrative unity which might at any moment be snapped irretrievably by centrifugal forces.

But after all, it may be said, unity is the first need and should be achieved at any cost, just as national unity was achieved by crushing out the separate existence of the local units; afterwards a new principle of group-variation may be found other than the nation-unit. But the parallel here becomes illusory, because an important factor is lacking. For the history of the birth of the nation is a coalescence of small groups into a larger unit among many similar large units. The old richness of small units which gave such splendid cultural, but such unsatisfactory political results in Greece, Italy and India was lost, but the principle of life made vivid by variative diversity was preserved with nations for the diverse units and the cultural life of a continent for the common background. Here nothing of the kind is possible. There will be a sole unity, the world-nation, all outer source of diversity will disappear. Therefore the inner source has to be modified indeed, subordinated in some way, but preserved and encouraged to survive. It may be that this will not happen, the unitarian idea may forcefully prevail and turn the existing nations into mere geographical provinces or administrative departments of a single well-mechanised State. But in that case the outraged need of life will have its revenge, either by a

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

stagnation, a collapse and a detrition fruitful of new separations or by some principle of revolt from within. A gospel of Anarchism might enforce itself, for example, and break down the world-order for a new creation. The question is whether there is not somewhere a principle of unity in diversity by which this method of action and reaction, creation and destruction, realisation and relapse cannot be, if not altogether avoided, yet mitigated in its action and led to a more serene and harmonious working.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THE only means that readily suggests itself by which a necessary group-freedom can be preserved and yet the unification of the human race achieved, is to strive not towards a closely organised World-State, but towards a free, elastic and progressive world-union. If this is to be done, we shall have to discourage the almost inevitable tendency which must lead any unification by political, economic and administrative means, in a word, by the force of machinery, to follow the analogy of the evolution of the nation-State. And we shall have to encourage and revive that force of idealistic nationalism which, before the war, seemed on the point of being crushed on the one side under the weight of the increasing world-empires of England, Russia, Germany and France, on the other by the progress of the opposite ideal of internationalism with its large and devastating contempt for the narrow ideas of country and nation and its denunciation of the evils of nationalistic patriotism. But at the same time we shall have to find a cure for the as yet incurable separative sentiments natural to the very idea to which we shall have to give a renewed strength. How is all this to be done?

On our side in the attempt we have the natural principle of compensating reactions. The law of action and reaction, valid even in physical Science, is in human

action, which must always depend largely on psychological forces, a more constant and pervading truth. That in life to every pressure of active forces there is a tendency of reaction of opposite or variative forces which may not immediately operate but must eventually come into the field or which may not act with an equal and entirely compensating force, but must act with some force of compensation, may be taken as well established. It is both a philosophical necessity and a constant fact of experience. For Nature works by a balancing system of the interplay of opposite forces. When she has insisted for some time on the dominant force of one tendency as against all others, she seeks to correct its exaggerations by reviving, if dead, or newly awakening, if only in slumber, or bringing into the field in a new and modified form the tendency that is exactly opposite. After long insistence on centralisation, she tries to modify it by at least a subordinated decentralisation. After insisting on more and more uniformity, she calls again into play the spirit of multiform variation. The result need not be an equipollence of the two tendencies, it may be any kind of compromise. Or, instead of a compromise it may be in act a fusion and in result a new creation which shall be a compound of both principles. We may expect her to apply the same method to the tendencies of unification and group-variation in dealing with the great mass unit of humanity. At present, the nation is the fulcrum which the latter tendency has been using for its workings as against the imperialistic tendency of unifying assimilation. Now the course of Nature's working in humanity may destroy the nation-unit, as she destroyed the tribe and clan, and develop a quite new principle of grouping; but she may preserve it and give it sufficient power of

vitality and duration to balance usefully the trend towards too heavy a force of unification. It is this latter contingency that we have to consider.

The two forces in action before the war were imperialism—of various colours, the more rigid imperialism of Germany, the more liberal imperialism of England,—and nationalism. They were the two sides of one phenomenon, the aggressive or expansive and the defensive aspects of national egoism. But in the trend of imperialism this egoism had some eventual chance of dissolving itself by excessive self-enlargement, as the aggressive tribe disappeared, for example, the Persian tribe, first into the empire and then into the nationality of the Persian people, or as the city state also disappeared, first into the Roman Empire and then both tribe and city state without hope of revival into the nations which arose by fusion out of the irruption of the German tribes into the declining Latin unity. In the same or a similar way aggressive national imperialism by overspreading the world might end in destroying altogether the nation-unit as the city state and tribe were destroyed by the aggressive expansion of a few dominant city states and tribes. The force of defensive nationalism has reacted against this tendency, restricted it and constantly thwarted its evolutionary aim. But before the war, the separative force of nationalism seemed doomed to impotence and final suppression in face of the tremendous power with which science, organisation and efficiency had armed the governing States of the large imperial aggregates.

All the facts were pointing in one direction. Korea had disappeared into the nascent Japanese empire on the mainland of Asia. Persian nationalism had

succumbed and lay suppressed under a system of spheres of influence which were really a veiled protectorate,—and all experience shows that the beginning of a protectorate is also the beginning of the end of the protected nation; it is a euphemistic name for the first process of chewing previous to deglutition. Tibet and Siam were so weak and visibly declining that their continued immunity could not be hoped for. China had only escaped by the jealousies of the world-Powers and by its size which made it an awkward morsel to swallow, let alone to digest. The partition of all Asia between four or five or at the most six great empires seemed a foregone conclusion which nothing but an unexampled international convulsion could prevent. The European conquest of Northern Africa had practically been completed by the disappearance of Morocco, the confirmed English protectorate over Egypt and the Italian hold on Tripoli. Somaliland was in a preliminary process of slow deglutition; Abyssinia, saved once by Menelik but now torn by internal discord, was the object of a revived dream of Italian colonial empire. The Boer republics had gone under before the advancing tide of imperialistic aggression. All the rest of Africa practically was the private property of three great Powers and two small ones. In Europe, no doubt, there were still a few small independent nations, Balkan and Teutonic, and also two quite unimportant neutralised countries. But the Balkans were a constant theatre of uncertainty and disturbance and the rival national egoisms could only have ended in case of the ejection of Turkey from Europe, either by the formation of a young, hungry and ambitious Slav empire under the dominance of Serbia or Bulgaria or by their disappearance into

the shadow of Austria and Russia. The Teutonic States were coveted by expanding Germany and, had that Power been guided by the prudently daring diplomacy of a new Bismarck,—a not unlikely contingency, could William II have gone to the grave before letting loose the hounds of war,—their absorption might well have been compassed. There remained America where imperialism had not yet arisen, but it was already emerging in the form of Rooseveltian Republicanism, and the interference in Mexico, hesitating as it was, yet pointed to the inevitability of a protectorate and a final absorption of the disorderly Central American republics; the union of South America would then have become a defensive necessity. It was only the stupendous cataclysm of the world war which interfered with the progressive march towards the division of the world into less than a dozen great empires.

The war revived with a startling force the idea of free nationality, throwing it up in three forms, each with a stamp of its own. First, in opposition to the imperialistic ambitions of Germany in Europe, the allied nations, although empires, were obliged to appeal to a qualified ideal of free nationality and pose as its champions and protectors. America, more politically idealistic than Europe, entered the war with a cry for a league of free nations. Finally the original idealism of the Russian revolution cast into this new creative chaos an entirely new element by the distinct, positive, uncompromising recognition, free from all reserves of diplomacy and self-interest, of the right of every aggregate of men naturally marked off from other aggregates to decide its own political status and destiny. These three positions were in fact distinct from each other, but each has in effect

some relation to the actually possible future of humanity. The first based itself upon the present conditions and aimed at a certain practical rearrangement. The second tried to hasten into immediate practicability a not entirely remote possibility of the future. The third aimed at bringing into precipitation by the alchemy of revolution—for what we inappropriately call revolution, is only a rapidly concentrated movement of evolution—a yet remote end which, in the ordinary course of events, could only be realised, if at all, in the far distant future. All of them have to be considered; for a prospect which only takes into view existing realised forces or apparently realisable possibilities is foredoomed to error. Moreover, the Russian idea by its attempt at self-effectuation, however immediately ineffective, rendered itself an actual force which must be counted among those that may influence the future of the race. A great idea already striving to enforce itself in the field of practice is a power which cannot be left out of count, nor valued only according to its apparent chances of immediate effectuation at the present hour.

The position taken by England, France and Italy, the Western European section of the Allies, contemplated a political rearrangement of the world, but not any radical change of its existing order. It is true that it announced the principle of free nationalities; but in international politics which is still a play of natural forces and interest and in which ideals are only a comparatively recent development of the human mind, principles can only prevail where and so far as they are consonant with interests, or where and so far as, being hostile to interests, they are yet assisted by natural forces strong enough to overbear these interests which

oppose them. The pure application of ideals to politics is as yet a revolutionary method of action which can only be hoped for in exceptional crises; the day when it becomes a rule of life, human nature and life itself will have become a new phenomenon, something almost superterrestrial and divine. That day is not yet. The allied Powers in Europe were themselves nations with an imperial past and an imperial future; they could not, even if they wished, get away by the force of a mere idea from that past and that future. Their first interest, and therefore the first duty of their statesmen, must be to preserve each its own empire, and even, where it can in their view be legitimately done, to increase it. The principle of free nationality could only be applied by them in its purity where their own imperial interests were not affected, as against Turkey and the Central Powers, because there the principle was consonant with their own interests and could be supported as against German, Austrian or Turkish interests by the natural forces of a successful war which was or could be made to appear morally justified in its result because it was invited by the Powers which had to suffer. It could not be applied in its purity where their own imperial interests were affected, because there it was opposed to existing forces and there was no sufficient countervailing force by which that opposition could be counteracted. Here, therefore, it must be acted upon in a qualified sense, as a force moderating that of pure imperialism. So applied, it would amount in fact at present to the concession of internal self-government or Home Rule in such proportion, at such a time or by such stages as might be possible, practicable and expedient for the interests of the empire and of the subject nation so far as they could be

accommodated with one another. It must be understood, in other words, as the common sense of the ordinary man would understand it; it could not be and has nowhere been understood in the sense which would be attached to it by the pure idealist of the Russian type who was careless of all but the naked purity of his principle.

What then would be the practical consequences of this qualified principle of free nationality as it would have been possible to apply it after a complete victory of the Allied Powers, its representatives? In America, it would have no field of immediate application. In Africa, there are not only no free nations, but with the exception of Egypt and Abyssinia, no nations, properly speaking; for Africa is the one part of the world where the old tribal conditions have still survived and only tribal peoples exist, not nations in the political sense of the word. Here then a complete victory of the Allies meant the partition of the continent between three colonial empires, Italy, France and England, with the continuance of the Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese enclaves and the precarious continuance for a time of the Abyssinian kingdom. In Asia, it meant the appearance of three or four new nationalities out of the ruins of the Turkish empire; but these by their immaturity would all be foredoomed to remain, for a time at least, under the influence or the protection of one or other of the great Powers. In Europe, it implied the diminution of Germany by the loss of Alsace and Poland, the disintegration of the Austrian empire, the reversion of the Adriatic coast to Serbia and Italy, the liberation of the Czech and Polish nations, some rearrangement in the Balkan Peninsula and the adjacent countries. All this, it is clear, meant a great change in the map of the world, but no radical transformation. The existing

tendency of nationalism would gain some extension by the creation of a number of new independent nations; the existing tendency of imperial aggregation would gain a far greater extension by the expansion of the actual territory, world-wide influence and international responsibilities of the successful empires.

Still, certain very important results could not but be gained which must make in the end for a free world-union. The most important of these, the result of the Russian Revolution born out of the war and its battle-cry of free nationality but contingent on the success and maintenance of the revolutionary principle, is the disappearance of Russia as an aggressive empire and its transformation from an imperialistic aggregate into a congeries or a federation of free republics.¹ The second is the destruction of the German type of imperialism and the salvation of a number of independent nationalities which lay under its menace. The third is the multiplication of distinct nationalities with a claim to the recognition of their separate existence and legitimate voice in the affairs of the world, which makes for the strengthening of the idea of a free world-union as the ultimate solution of international problems. The fourth is the definite recognition by the British nation of the qualified principle of free nationality in the inevitable reorganisation of the Empire.

This development took two forms, the recognition of the principle of Home Rule in Ireland and India and the recognition of the claim of each constituent nation to a

¹ Not so free in practice under Bolshevik rule as in principle; but still the principle is there and capable of development in a freer future.

voice, which in the event of Home Rule¹, must mean a free and equal voice, in the councils of the Empire. Taken together, these things would mean the ultimate conversion from an empire constituted on the old principle of nationalistic imperialism which was represented by the supreme government of one predominant nation, England, into a free and equal commonwealth of nations managing their common affairs through a supple co-ordination by mutual goodwill and agreement. In other words, such a development could mean in the end the application within certain limits of precisely that principle which would underlie the constitution, on the larger scale, of a free world-union. Much work would have to be done, several extensions made, many counterforces overcome before such a commonwealth could become a realised fact, but that it should have taken shape in the principle and in the germ, constitutes a notable event in world-history. Two questions remained for the future. What would be the

¹ Now called Dominion Status. Unfortunately, this recognition could not be put into force except after a violent struggle in Ireland and was marred by the partition of the country. After a vehement passive resistance in India it came to be recognised there but in a truncated form shifting the full concession to a far future. In Egypt also it was only after a struggle that freedom was given but subject to a controlling British alliance. Still the nationalistic principle worked in the creation of a free Irak, the creation of Arab kingdom and Syrian republics, the withdrawal of imperialistic influence from Persia and, above all, in the institution of Dominion Status substituting an internally free and equal position in a commonwealth of peoples for a dominating Empire. Yet these results, however imperfect, prepared the greater fulfilments which we now see accomplished as part of a new world of free peoples.

THE IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

effect of this experiment on the other empires which adhere to the old principle of a dominant centralisation? Probably it would have this effect, if it succeeded, that, as they are faced by the growth of strong nationalistic movements, they may be led to adopt the same or a similar solution, just as they adopted from England with modifications her successful system of Parliamentary government in the affairs of the nation. Secondly, what of the relation between these empires and the many independent non-imperial nations or republics which would exist under the new arrangement of the world? How are they to be preserved from fresh attempts to extend the imperial idea, or how is their existence to be correlated in the international comity with the huge and overshadowing power of the empires? It is here that the American idea of the League of Free Nations intervened and found a justification in principle.

Unfortunately, it was always difficult to know what exactly this idea would mean in practice. The utterances of its original spokesman, President Wilson, were marked by a magnificent nebulous idealism full of inspiring ideas and phrases, but not attended by a clear and specific application. For the idea behind the head of the President we must look for light to the past history and the traditional temperament of the American people. The United States were always pacific and non-imperialistic in sentiment and principle, yet with an undertone of nationalistic susceptibility which threatened recently to take an imperialistic turn and led the nation to make two or three wars ending in conquests whose results it had then to reconcile with its non-imperialistic pacifism. It annexed Mexican Texas by war and then turned it into a constituent State of the union, swamping it at the same time with

American colonists. It conquered Cuba from Spain and the Philippines first from Spain and then from the insurgent Filipinos and, not being able to swamp them with colonists, gave Cuba independence under the American influence and promised the Filipinos a complete independence. American idealism was always governed by a shrewd sense of American interests, and highest among these interests is reckoned the preservation of the American political idea and its constitution, to which all imperialism, foreign or American, has to be regarded as a mortal peril.

As a result and as the result of its inevitable amalgamation with that much more qualified aim of the Allied Powers, a League of Nations was bound to have both an opportunist and idealistic element. The opportunist element was bound to take in its first form the legalisation of the map and political formation of the world as it emerged from the convulsion of the war. Its idealistic side, if supported by the use of the influence of America in the League, would favour the increasing application of the democratic principle in its working, and its result might be the final emergence of a United States of the world with a democratic Congress of the nations as its governing agency. The legalisation might have the good effect of minimising the chances of war, if a real League of Nations proved practicable and succeeded,—even under the best conditions by no means a foregone conclusion.¹ But it would have the bad effect of tending to stereotype a state of things which must be in part artificial, irregular,

¹ The League was eventually formed with America outside it and as an instrument of European diplomacy, which was a bad omen for its future.

anomalous and only temporarily useful. Law is necessary for order and stability, but it becomes a conservative and hampering force unless it provides itself with an effective machinery for changing the laws as soon as circumstances and new needs make that desirable. This can only happen if a true Parliament, Congress or free Council of the nations becomes an accomplished thing. Meanwhile, how is the added force for the conservation of old principles to be counteracted and an evolution assured which will lead to the consummation desired by the democratic American ideal? America's presence and influence in such a League would not be sufficient for that purpose; for it would have at its side other influences interested in preserving the *status quo* and some interested in developing the imperialist solution. Another force, another influence would be needed. Here the Russian ideal, if truly applied and made a force, could intervene and find its justification. For our purpose, it would be the most interesting and important of the three anti-imperialistic influences which Nature might throw as elements into her great crucible to reshape the human earth-mass for a yet unforeseen purpose.

CHAPTER XXX

THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE CONFEDERATION

THE issues of the original Russian idea of a confederation of free self-determining nationalities were greatly complicated by the transitory phenomenon of a revolution which has sought, like the French Revolution before it, to transform immediately and without easy intermediate stages the whole basis not only of government, but of society, and has, moreover, been carried out under pressure of a disastrous war. This double situation led inevitably to an unexampled anarchy and, incidentally, to the forceful domination of an extreme party which represented the ideas of the Revolution in their most uncompromising and violent form. The Bolshevik despotism corresponds in this respect to the Jacobin despotism of the French Reign of Terror. The latter lasted long enough to secure its work, which was to effect violently and irrevocably the transition from the post-feudal system of society to the first middle-class basis of democratic development. The Labourite despotism in Russia, the rule of the Soviets, fixing its hold and lasting long enough, could effect the transition of society to a second and more advanced basis of the same or even to a still farther development. But we are concerned only with the effect on the ideal of free nationality. On this point, all Russia, except the small reactionary party, was from the first agreed; but the resort to the principle of government by force brought

in a contradictory element which endangered its sound effectuation even in Russia itself and therefore weakened the force which it might have had in the immediate future of the world-development.¹ For it stands on a moral principle which belongs to the future; while government of other nations by force belongs to the past and present and is radically inconsistent with the founding of the new world-arrangement on the basis of free choice and free status. It must therefore be considered in itself apart from any application now received, which must necessarily be curbed and imperfect.

The political arrangement of the world hitherto has rested on an almost entirely physical and vital, that is to say, geographical, commercial, political and military basis. Both the nation idea and the State idea have been built and have worked on this foundation. The first unity aimed at has been a geographical, commercial, political and military union, and in establishing this unity, the earlier vital principle of race on which the clan and tribe were founded, has been everywhere overridden. It is true that nationhood still founds itself largely on the idea of race, but this is in the nature of a fiction. It covers the historical fact of a fusion of many races and attributes a natural motive to a historical and geographical association. Nationhood founds itself partly on this association, partly on others which accentuate it, common interests, community of language, community of culture and all these in unison have evolved a

¹ The component States of socialistic Russia are allowed a certain cultural, linguistic and other autonomy, but the rest is illusory as they are, in fact, governed by the force of a highly centralised autocracy in Moscow.

psychological idea, a psychological unity, which finds expression in the idea of nationalism. But the nation idea and the State idea do not everywhere coincide, and in most cases the former has been overridden by the latter and always on the same physical and vital grounds—grounds of geographical, political and military necessity or convenience. In the conflict between the two, force, as in all vital and physical struggle, must always be the final arbiter. But the new principle proposed,¹ that of the right of every natural grouping which feels its own separateness to choose its own status and partnerships, makes a clean sweep of these vital and physical grounds and substitutes a purely psychological principle of free-will and free choice as against the claims of political and economic necessity. Or rather the vital and physical grounds of grouping are only to be held valid when they receive this psychological sanction and are to found themselves upon it.

How the two rival principles work out, can be seen by the example of Russia itself which is now prominently before our eyes. Russia has never been a nation-State, in the pure sense of the word, like France, Spain, Italy, Great Britain or modern Germany; it has been a congeries of nations, Great Russia, Ruthenian Ukraine, White Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Siberia, all Slavic with a dash of Tartar and German blood, Courland which is mostly Slav but partly German, Finland which has no community of any kind with the rest of Russia, and latterly the Asiatic nations of Turkistan, all bound

¹ This principle was recognised in theory by the Allies under the name of self-determination but, needless to say, it has been disregarded as soon as the cry had served its turn.

together by one bond only, the rule of the Tsar. The only psychological justification of such a union was the future possibility of fusion into a single nation with the Russian language as its instrument of culture, thought and government, and it was this which the old Russian regime had in view. The only way to bring this about was by governmental force, the way that had been long attempted by England in Ireland and as attempted by Germany in German Poland and Lorraine. The Austrian method of federation employed with Hungary as a second partner or of a pressure tempered by leniency, by concessions and by measures of administrative half-autonomy, might have been tried, but their success in Austria has been small. Federation has not as yet proved a successful principle except between States and nations or sub-nations already disposed to unite by ties of common culture, a common past or an already developed or developing sense of common nationhood; such conditions existed in the American States and in Germany and they exist in China and in India, but they have not existed in Austria or Russia. Or, if things and ideas had been ripe, instead of this attempt, there might have been an endeavour to found a free union of nations with the Tsar as the symbol of a supra-national idea and bond of unity; but for this the movement of the world was not yet ready. Against an obstinate psychological resistance the vital and physical motive of union could only resort to force, military, administrative and political, which has succeeded often enough in the past. In Russia, it was probably on the way to a slow success as far as the Slavic portions of the Empire were concerned; in Finland, perhaps also in Poland, it would probably have failed much more irretrievably than the long reign of force

failed in Ireland, partly because even a Russian or a German autocracy cannot apply perfectly and simply the large, thorough-going and utterly brutal and predatory methods of a Cromwell or Elizabeth,¹ partly because the resisting psychological factor of nationalism had become too self-conscious and capable of an organised passive resistance or at least a passive force of survival.

But if the psychological justification was deficient or only in process of creation, the vital and physical case for a strictly united Russia, not excluding Finland, was overwhelming. The work of the Peters and Catherines was founded on a strong political, military and economic necessity. From the political and military point of view, all these Slavic nations had everything to lose by disunion, because, disunited, they were each exposed and they exposed each other to the oppressive contact of any powerful neighbour, Sweden, Turkey, Poland, while Poland was a hostile and powerful State, or Germany and Austria. The union of the Ukraine Cossacks with Russia was indeed brought about by mutual agreement as a measure of defence against Poland. Poland itself, once weakened, stood a better chance by being united with Russia than by standing helpless and alone between three large and powerful neighbours, and her total inclusion would certainly have been a better solution for

¹ This could no longer be said after the revival of mediaeval barbaric cruelty in Nazi Germany, one of the most striking recent developments of "modern" humanity. But this may be regarded perhaps as a temporary backsliding, though it sheds lurid lights on the still existing darker possibilities of human nature.

her than the fatal partition between three hungry Powers. On the other hand, by union a State was created, so geographically compact, yet so large in bulk, numerous in population, well defended by natural conditions and rich in potential resources that, if it had been properly organised, it could not only have stood secure in itself, but dominated half Asia, as it already does, and half Europe, as it was once, even without proper organisation and development, almost on the way to do, when it interfered as armed arbiter, here deliverer, there champion of oppression in Austro-Hungary and in the Balkans. Even the assimilation of Finland was justified from this point of view; for a free Finland would have left Russia geographically and economically incomplete and beset and limited in her narrow Baltic outlet, while a Finland dominated by a strong Sweden or a powerful Germany would have been a standing military menace to the Russian capital and the Russian empire. The inclusion of Finland, on the contrary, made Russia secure, at ease and powerful at this vital point. Nor, might it be argued, did Finland herself really lose, since, independent, she would be too small and weak to maintain herself against neighbouring imperial aggressiveness and must rely on the support of Russia. All these advantages have been destroyed, temporarily at least, by the centrifugal forces let loose by the Revolution and its principle of the free choice of nationalities.

It is evident that these arguments, founded as they are on vital and physical necessity and regardless of moral and psychological justification, might be carried very far. They would not only justify Austria's now past domination of Trieste and her Slavic territories, as they justified England's conquest and holding of Ireland

against the continued resistance of the Irish people, but also, extended a little farther, Germany's scheme of Pan-Germanism and even her larger ideas of absorption and expansion. It could be extended to validate all that imperial expansion of the European nations which has now no moral justification and could only have been justified morally in the future by the creation of supra-national psychological unities; for the vital and physical grounds always exist. Even the moral, at least the psychological and cultural justification of a unified Russian culture and life in process of creation, could be extended, and the European claim to spread and universalise European civilisation by annexation and governmental force presents on its larger scale a certain moral analogy. This, too, extended, might justify the pre-war German ideal of a sort of unification of the world under the aegis of German power and German culture. But, however liable to abuse by extension, vital necessity must be allowed a word in a world still dominated fundamentally by the law of force, however mitigated in its application, and by vital and physical necessity, so far at least as concerns natural geographical unities like Russia, the United Kingdom,¹ even Austria within its natural frontiers.²

The Russian principle belongs, in fact, to a possible future in which moral and psychological principles will have a real chance to dominate, and vital and physical

¹ Now we must say Great Britain and Ireland, for the United Kingdom exists no longer.

² Note from this point of view the disastrous economic results of the breaking up of the Austrian empire in the small nations that have arisen in its place.

necessities will have to suit themselves to them, instead of, as now, the other way round; it belongs to an arrangement of things that would be the exact reverse of the present international system. As things are at present, it has to struggle against difficulties which may well be insuperable. The Russians were much ridiculed and more vilified for their offer of a democratic peace founded on the free choice of nations to autocratic and militarist Germany bent on expansion like other empires by dishonest diplomacy and by the sword. From the point of view of practical statesmanship the ridicule was justified; for the offer ignored facts and forces and founded itself on the power of the naked and unarmed idea. The Russians, thorough-going idealists, acted, in fact, in the same spirit as did once the French in the first fervour of their revolutionary enthusiasm; they offered their new principle of liberty and democratic peace to the world,—not, at first, to Germany alone,—in the hope that its moral beauty and truth and inspiration would compel acceptance, not by the Governments but by the peoples who would force the hands of the governments or overturn them if they opposed. Like the French Revolutionists, they found that ours is still a world in which ideals can only be imposed if they have a preponderating vital and physical force in their hands or at their backs. The French Jacobins with their ideal of unitarian nationalism were able to concentrate their energies and make their principle triumph for a time by force of arms against a hostile world. The Russian idealists found in their attempt to effectuate their principle that the principle itself was a source of weakness; they found themselves helpless against the hard-headed German cynicism, not because they were

disorganised,—for revolutionary France was also disorganised and overcame the difficulty,—but because the dissolution of the old Russian fabric to which they had consented deprived them of the means of united and organised action. Nevertheless, their principle was a more advanced, because a moral principle, than the aggressive nationalism which was all the international result of the French Revolution; it has a greater meaning for the future.

For it belongs to a future of free world-union in which precisely this principle of free self-determination must be either the preliminary movement or the main final result, to an arrangement of things in which the world will have done with war and force as the ultimate basis of national and international relations and be ready to adopt free agreement as a substitute. If the idea could work itself out, even if only within the bounds of Russia,¹ and arrive at some principle of common action, even at the cost of that aggressive force which national centralisation can alone give, it would mean a new moral power in the world. It would certainly not be accepted elsewhere, except in case of unexpected revolutions, without enormous reserves and qualifications; but it would be there working as a power to make the world ready for itself and, when it is ready, would play a large determining part in the final arrangement of human unity. But even if it fails entirely in its present push for realisation, it will still have its part to play in a better prepared future.

¹ The idea was sincere at the time, but it has lost its significance because of the principle of revolutionary force on which Sovietism still rests.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION

A FREE world-union must in its very nature be a complex unity based on a diversity and that diversity must be based on free self-determination. A mechanical unitarian system would regard in its idea the geographical groupings of men as so many conveniences for provincial division, for the convenience of administration, much in the same spirit as the French Revolution reconstituted France with an entire disregard of old natural and historic divisions. It would regard mankind as one single nation and it would try to efface the old separative national spirit altogether; it would arrange its system probably by continents and subdivide the continents by convenient geographical demarcations. In this other quite opposite idea, the geographical, the physical principle of union would be subordinated to a psychological principle; for not a mechanical division, but a living diversity would be its object. If this object is to be secured, the peoples of humanity must be allowed to group themselves according to their free-will and their natural affinities; no constraint or force could be allowed to compel an unwilling nation or distinct grouping of peoples to enter into another system or join itself or remain joined to it for the convenience, aggrandisement or political necessity of another people or even for the general convenience, in disregard of its own

wishes. Nations or countries widely divided from each other geographically like England and Canada or England and Australia might cohere together. Nations closely grouped locally might choose to stand apart, like England and Ireland or like Finland and Russia. Unity would be the largest principle of life, but freedom would be its foundation-stone.¹

In a world built on the present political and commercial basis this system of groupings might present often insuperable difficulties or serious disadvantages; but in the condition of things in which alone a free world-union would be possible, these difficulties and disadvantages would cease to operate. Military necessity of forced union for strength of defence or for power of aggression would be non-existent, because war would no longer be possible; force as the arbiter of international differences and a free world-union are two quite incompatible ideas and practically could not coexist. The political necessity would also disappear; for it is largely made up of that very spirit of conflict and the consequent insecure conditions of international life apportioning predominance in the world to the physically and organically strongest nations out of which the military necessity arose. In a free world-union determining its affairs and settling its differences by agreement or, where agreement failed, by arbitration, the only political advantage of including large masses of men not otherwise allied to each other in a single State would be the greater influence arising from mass and population. But this influence

¹ Necessarily to every principle there must be in application a reasonable limit; otherwise fantastic and impracticable absurdities might take the place of a living truth.

THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION

could not work if the inclusion were against the will of the nations brought together in the State; for then it would rather be a source of weakness and disunion in the State's international action—unless indeed it were allowed in the international system to weigh by its bulk and population without regard to the will and opinion of the peoples constituting it. Thus the population of Finland and Poland might swell the number of voices which a united Russia could count in the council of the nations, but the will, sentiment and opinions of the Finns and Poles be given no means of expression in that mechanical and unreal unity.¹ But this would be contrary to the modern sense of justice and reason and incompatible with the principle of freedom which could alone ensure a sound and peaceful basis for the world-arrangement. Thus the elimination of war and the settlement of differences by peaceful means would remove the military necessity for forced unions, while the right of every people to a free voice and status in the world would remove its political necessity and advantage. The elimination of war and the recognition of the equal rights of all peoples are intimately bound up with each other. That interdependence, admitted for a moment, even though imperfectly, during the European conflict, will have to be permanently accepted if there is to be any unification of the race.

The economic question remains, and it is the sole important problem of a vital and physical order which might possibly present in this kind of world-arrangement any serious difficulties, or in which the advantages of a

¹ The inclusion of India in the League of Nations has evidently been an arrangement of this type.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

unitarian system might really outweigh those of this more complex unity. In either, however, the forcible economic exploitation of one nation by another, which is so large a part of the present economic order, would necessarily be abolished. There would remain the possibility of a sort of peaceful economic struggle, a separateness, a building up of artificial barriers,—a phenomenon which has been a striking and more and more prominent feature of the present commercial civilisation. But it is likely that once the element of struggle were removed from the political field, the stress of the same struggle in the economic field would greatly decrease. The advantages of self-sufficiency and predominance, to which political rivalry and struggle and the possibility of hostile relations now give an enormous importance, would lose much of their stringency and the advantages of a freer give and take would become more easily visible. It is obvious, for example, that an independent Finland would profit much more by encouraging the passage of Russian commerce through Finnish ports or an Italian Trieste by encouraging the passage of the commerce of the present Austrian provinces than by setting up a barrier between itself and its natural feeders. An Ireland politically or administratively independent, able to develop its agricultural and technical education and intensification of productiveness, would find a greater advantage in sharing the movement of the commerce of Great Britain than in isolating itself, even as Great Britain would profit more by an agreement with such an Ireland than by keeping her a poor and starving helot on her estate. Throughout the world, the idea and fact of union once definitely prevailing, unity of interests would be more clearly seen and the greater advantage

THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION

of agreement and mutual participation in a naturally harmonised life over the feverish artificial prosperity created by a stressing of separative barriers. That stressing is inevitable in an order of struggle and international competition; it would be seen to be prejudicial in an order of peace and union which would make for mutual accommodation. The principle of a free world-union being that of the settlement of common affairs by common agreement, this could not be confined to the removal of political differences and the arrangement of political relations alone, but must naturally extend to economic differences and economic relations as well. To the removal of war and the recognition of the right of self-determination of the peoples the arrangement of the economic life of the world in its new order by mutual and common agreement would have to be added as the third condition of a free union.

There remains the psychological question of the advantage to the soul of humanity, to its culture, to its intellectual, moral, aesthetic, spiritual growth. At present, the first great need of the psychological life of humanity is the growth towards a greater unity; but its need is that of a living unity, not in the externals of civilisation, in dress, manners, habits of life, details of political, social and economic order, not a uniformity, which is the unity towards which the mechanical age of civilisation has been driving, but a free development everywhere with a constant friendly interchange, a close understanding, a feeling of our common humanity, its great common ideals and the truths towards which it is driving and a certain unity and correlation of effort in the united human advance. At present it may seem that this is better helped and advanced by many different

nations and cultures living together in one political State-union than by their political separateness. Temporarily, this may be true to a certain extent, but let us see within what limits.

The old psychological argument for the forcible inclusion of a subject nation by a dominant people was the right or advantage of imposing a superior civilisation upon one that was inferior or upon a barbarous race. Thus the Welsh and Irish people used to be told that their subjugation was a great blessing to their countries, their languages petty patois which ought to disappear as soon as possible, and in embracing English speech, English institutions, English ideas lay their sole road to civilisation, culture and prosperity. The British domination in India was justified by the priceless gift of British civilisation and British ideals, to say nothing of the one and only true religion, Christianity, to a heathen, orientally benighted and semi-barbarous nation. All this is now an exploded myth. We can see clearly enough that the long suppression of the Celtic spirit and Celtic culture, superior in spirituality if inferior in certain practical directions to the Latin and Teutonic, was a loss not only to the Celtic peoples, but to the world. India has vehemently rejected the pretensions to superiority of British civilisation, culture and religion, while still admitting, not so much the British, as the modern ideals and methods in politics and in the trend to a greater social equality; and it is becoming clear now, even to the more well-informed European minds that the Anglicisation of India would have been a wrong not only to India itself but to humanity.

Still it may be said that, if the old principle of the association was wrong, yet the association itself leads

THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION

eventually to a good result. If Ireland has lost for the most part its old national speech and Welsh has ceased to have a living literature, yet as a large compensation the Celtic spirit is now reviving and putting its stamp on the English tongue spoken by millions throughout the world, and the inclusion of the Celtic countries in the British Empire may lead to the development of an Anglo-Celtic life and culture better for the world than the separate development of the two elements. India by the partial possession of the English language has been able to link herself to the life of the modern world and to reshape her literature, life and culture on a larger basis and, now that she is reviving her own spirit and ideals in a new mould, is producing an effect on the thought of the West; a perpetual union of the two countries and a constant mutual interaction of their culture by this close association would be more advantageous to them and to the world than their cultural isolation from each other in a separate existence.

There is a temporary apparent truth in this idea, though it is not the whole truth of the position, and we have given it full weight in considering the claims of the imperialistic solution or line of advance on the way to unity. But even the elements of truth in it can only be admitted, provided a free and equal union replaces the present abnormal, irritating and falsifying relations. Moreover, these advantages could only be valuable as a stage towards a greater unity in which this close association would no longer be of the same importance. For the final end is a common world-culture in which each national culture should be, not merged into or fused with some other culture differing from it in principle or temperament, but evolved to its

full power and could then profit to that end by all the others as well as give its gains and influences to them, all serving by their separateness and their interaction the common aim and idea of human perfection. This would best be served, not by separateness and isolation, of which there would be no danger, but yet by a certain distinctness and independence of life not subordinated to the mechanising force of an artificial unity. Even within the independent nation itself, there might be with advantage a tendency towards greater local freedom of development and variation, a sort of return to the vivid local and regional life of ancient Greece and India and mediaeval Italy; for the disadvantages of strife, political weakness and precariousness of the nation's independence would no longer exist in a condition of things from which the old terms of physical conflict had been excluded, while all the cultural and psychological advantages might be recovered. A world secure of its peace and freedom might freely devote itself to the intensification of its real human powers of life by the full encouragement and flowering of the individual, local, regional, national mind and power in the firm frame of a united humanity.

What precise form the framework might take, it is impossible to forecast and useless to speculate; only certain now current ideas would have to be modified or abandoned. The idea of a world-parliament is attractive at first sight, because the parliamentary form is that to which our minds are accustomed; but an assembly of the present unitarian national type could not be the proper instrument of a free world-union of this large and complex kind; it could only be the instrument of a unitarian World-State. The idea of a world-federation,

THE CONDITIONS OF A FREE WORLD-UNION

if by that be understood the Germanic or American form, would be equally inappropriate to the greater diversity and freedom of national development which this type of world-union would hold as one of its cardinal principles. Rather some kind of confederation of the peoples for common human ends, for the removal of all causes of strife and difference, for interrelation and the regulation of mutual aid and interchange, yet leaving to each unit a full internal freedom and power of self-determination, would be the right principle of this unity.

But, since this is a much looser unity, what would prevent the spirit of separateness and the causes of clash and difference from surviving in so powerful a form as to endanger the endurance of the larger principle of oneness,—even if that spirit and those causes at all allowed it to reach some kind of sufficient fulfilment? The unitarian ideal, on the contrary, seeks to efface these opposite tendencies in their forms and even in their root cause and by so doing would seem to ensure an enduring union. But it may be pointed out in answer that, if it is by political ideas and machinery, under the pressure of the political and economic spirit that the unity is brought about, that is to say, by the idea and experience of the material advantages, conveniences, well-being secured by unification, then the unitarian system also could not be sure of durability. For in the constant mutability of the human mind and earthly circumstances, as long as life is active, new ideas and changes are inevitable. The suppressed desire to recover the lost element of variability, separateness, independent living might well take advantage of them for what would then be considered as a wholesome and necessary

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

reaction. The lifeless unity accomplished would dissolve from the pressure of the need of life within, as the Roman unity dissolved by its lifelessness in helpless response to a pressure from without, and once again local, regional, national egoism would reconstitute for itself fresh forms and new centres.

On the other hand, in a free world-union, though originally starting from the national basis, the national idea might be expected to undergo a radical transformation; it might even disappear into a new and less strenuously compact form and idea of group-aggregation which would not be separative in spirit, yet would preserve the necessary element of independence and variation needed by both individual and grouping for their full satisfaction and their healthy existence. Moreover, by emphasising the psychological quite as much as the political and mechanical idea and basis, it would give a freer and less artificial form and opportunity for the secure development of the necessary intellectual and psychological change; for such an inner change could alone give some chance of durability to the unification. That change would be the growth of the living idea or religion of humanity; for only so could there come the psychological modification of life and feeling and outlook which would accustom both individual and group to live in their common humanity first and most, subduing their individual and group-egoism, yet losing nothing of their individual or group-power to develop and express in its own way the divinity in man which, once the race was assured of its material existence, would emerge as the true object of human existence.

CHAPTER XXXII

INTERNATIONALISM

THE idea of humanity as a single race of beings with a common life and a common general interest is among the most characteristic and significant products of modern thought. It is an outcome of the European mind which proceeds characteristically from life-experience to the idea and, without going deeper, returns from the idea upon life in an attempt to change its outward forms and institutions, its order and system. In the European mentality it has taken the shape known currently as internationalism. Internationalism is the attempt of the human mind and life to grow out of the national idea and form and even in a way to destroy it in the interest of the larger synthesis of mankind. An idea proceeding on these lines needs always to attach itself to some actual force or developing power in the life of the times before it can exercise a practical effect. But usually it suffers by contact with the interest and prepossessions of its grosser ally some lesser or greater diminution of itself or even a distortion, and in that form, no longer pure and absolute, enters on the first stage of practice.

The idea of internationalism was born of the thought of the eighteenth century and it took some kind of voice in the first idealistic stages of the French Revolution. But at that time, it was rather a vague intellectual sentiment than a clear idea seeing its way to practice; it found no

strong force in life to help it to take visible body. What came out of the French Revolution and the struggle that grew around it, was a complete and self-conscious nationalism and not internationalism. During the nineteenth century, we see the larger idea growing again in the minds of thinkers, sometimes in a modified form, sometimes in its own pure idealism, till allying itself with the growing forces of socialism and anarchism it took a clear body and a recognisable vital force. In its absolute form, it became the internationalism of the intellectuals, intolerant of nationalism as a narrow spirit of the past, contemptuous of patriotism as an irrational prejudice, a maleficent corporate egoism characteristic of narrow intellects and creative of arrogance, prejudice, hatred, oppression, division and strife between nation and nation, a gross survival of the past which the growth of reason was destined to destroy. It is founded on a view of things which looks at man in his manhood only and casts away all those physical and social accidents of birth, rank, class, colour, creed, nationality, which have been erected into so many walls and screens behind which man has hidden himself from his fellow-man; he has turned them into sympathy-proof shelters and trenches from which he wages against him a war of defence and aggression, war of nations, war of continents, war of classes, war of colour with colour, creed with creed, culture with culture. All this barbarism the idea of the intellectual internationalist seeks to abolish by putting man face to face with man on the basis of their common human sympathy, aims, highest interests of the future. It is entirely futurist in its view; it turns away from the confused and darkened good of the past to the purer good of the future when man, at last beginning to become a truly intelligent and

ethical being will shake away from him all these sources of prejudice and passion and evil. Humanity will become one in idea and feeling, and life be consciously what it now is in spite of itself, one in its status on earth and its destiny.

The height and nobility of the idea is not to be questioned and certainly a mankind which set its life upon this basis would make a better, purer, more peaceful and enlightened race than anything we can hope to have at present. But as the human being is now made, the pure idea, though always a great power, is also afflicted by a great weakness. It has an eventual capacity, once born, of taking hold of the rest of the human being and forcing him in the end to acknowledge its truth and make some kind of attempt to embody it; that is its strength. But also because man at present lives more in the outward than in the inward, is governed principally by his vital existence, sensations, feelings and customary mentality rather than by his higher thought-mind, and feels himself in these to be really alive, really to exist and be, while the world of ideas is to him something remote and abstract and, however powerful and interesting in its way, not a living thing, the pure idea seems, until it is embodied in life, something not quite real; in that abstractness and remoteness lies its weakness.

The sense of this abstractness imposes on the idea an undue haste to get itself recognised by life and embodied in a form. If it could have confidence in its strength and be content to grow, to insist, to impress itself till it got well into the spirit of man, it might conceivably become a real part of his soul-life, a permanent power in his psychology and might succeed in remoulding his whole life in its image. But it has inevitably a desire to get

as soon as possible admitted into a form of the life, for until then it does not feel itself strong and cannot quite be sure that it has vindicated its truth. It hurries into action before it has real knowledge of itself and thereby prepares its own disappointment, even when it seems to triumph and fulfil its object. For in order to succeed, it allies itself with powers and movements which are impelled by another aim than its own, but are glad enough to get its aid so that they may strengthen their own case and claim. Thus when it realises itself at last, it does it in a mixed, impure and ineffective form. Life accepts it as a partial habit, but not completely, not quite sincerely. That has been the history of every idea in succession and one reason at least why there is almost always something unreal, inconclusive and tormented about human progress.

There are many conditions and tendencies in human life at present which are favourable to the progress of the internationalist idea. The strongest of these favourable forces is the constant drawing closer of the knots of international life, the multiplication of points of contact and threads of communication and an increasing community in thought, in science and in knowledge. Science especially has been a great force in this direction; for science is a thing common to all men in its conclusions, open to all in its methods, available to all in its results: it is international in its very nature; there can be no such thing as a national science, but only the nations' contributions to the work and growth of science which are the indivisible inheritance of all humanity. Therefore it is easier for men of science or those strongly influenced by science to grow into the international spirit and all the world is now beginning to feel the scientific influence

INTERNATIONALISM

and to live in it. Science also has created that closer contact of every part of the world with every other part, out of which some sort of international mind is growing. Even cosmopolitan habits of life are now not uncommon and there are a fair number of persons who are as much or more citizens of the world as citizens of their own nation. The growth of knowledge is interesting the peoples in each other's art, culture, religion, ideas and is breaking down at many points the prejudice, arrogance and exclusiveness of the old nationalistic sentiment. Religion, which ought to have led the way, but owing to its greater dependence on its external parts and its infrarational rather than its spiritual impulses, has been as much, or even more, a sower of discord as a teacher of unity,—religion is beginning to realise, a little dimly and ineffectively as yet, that spirituality is after all its own chief business and true aim and that it is also the common element and the common bond of all religions. As these influences grow and come more and more consciously to co-operate with each other, it might be hoped that the necessary psychological modification will quietly, gradually, but still irresistibly and at last with an increasing force of rapidity, take place which can prepare a real and fundamental change in the life of humanity.

But this is at present a slow process, and meanwhile the internationalist idea, eager for effectuation, allied and almost identified itself with two increasingly powerful movements which have both assumed an international character, Socialism and Anarchism. Indeed, it is this alliance that most commonly went by the name of internationalism. But this socialistic and anarchistic internationalism was recently put to the test, the fiery

test of the European war, and thus tried, it was found sadly wanting. In every country, the Socialist party shed its internationalist promise with the greatest ease and lightness, German socialism, the protagonist of the idea, massively leading the way in this formidable abjuration. It is true that a small minority in each country either remained heroically faithful to its principles or soon returned to them, and as the general weariness of the great international massacre grew, even the majority showed a sensible turn in the same direction; but this was rather the fruit of circumstance than of principle. Russian socialism, it may be said, has, at least in its extremer form, shown a stronger root of internationalistic feeling. But what it has actually attempted to accomplish is a development of Labour rule on the basis of a purified nationalism, non-aggressive except for revolutionary purposes and self-contained, and not on the larger international idea. In any case, the actual results of the Russian attempt show only up to the present a failure of the idea to acquire the vital strength and efficiency which would justify it to life; it is possible to use them much more as a telling argument against internationalism than as a justification of its truth or at least of its applicability in the present stage of human progress.

But what is the cause of this almost total bankruptcy of the international ideal under the strong test of life? Partly it may be because the triumph of socialism is not necessarily bound up with the progress of internationalism. Socialism is really an attempt to complete the growth of the national community by making the individual do what he has never yet done, live for the community more than for himself. It is an outgrowth

of the national, not of the international idea. No doubt, when the society of the nation has been perfected, the society of nations can and even must be formed; but this is a later possible or eventual result of Socialism, not its primary vital necessity. In the crises of life it is the primary vital necessity which tells, while the other and remoter element betrays itself to be a mere idea not yet ready for accomplishment; it can only become powerful when it also becomes either a vital or a psychological necessity. The real truth, the real cause of the failure is that internationalism is as yet, except with some exceptional men, merely an idea; it is not yet a thing near to our vital feelings or otherwise a part of our psychology. The normal socialist or syndicalist cannot escape from the general human feeling and in the test he too turns out, even though he were a professed *sans-patrie* in ordinary times, in his inner heart and being a nationalist. As a vital fact, moreover, these movements have been a revolt of Labour aided by a number of intellectuals against the established state of things, and they have only allied themselves with internationalism, because that too is an intellectual revolt and because its idea helps them in the battle. If Labour comes to power, will it keep or shed its internationalistic tendencies? The experience of countries in which it is or has been at the head of affairs does not give an encouraging answer, and it may at least be said that, unless at that time the psychological change in humanity has gone much farther than it has now, Labour in power is likely to shed more of the internationalist feeling than it will succeed in keeping and to act very much from the old human motives.

No doubt, the European war itself was an explosion of all that was dangerous and evil in successful nationalism,

and the resulting conflagration may well turn out to have been a purificatory process that has burned up many things that needed to die. It has already strengthened the international idea and forced it on governments and peoples. But we cannot rely too greatly on ideas and resolutions formed in a moment of abnormal crisis under the violent stress of exceptional circumstances. Some effect there may be in the end, some first recognition of juster principles in international dealings, some attempt at a better, more rational or at least a more convenient international order. But until the idea of humanity has grown not only upon the intelligence but in the sentiments, feelings, natural sympathies and mental habits of man, the progress made is likely to be more in external adjustments than in the vital matters, more in a use of the ideal for mixed and egoistic purposes than at once or soon in a large and sincere realisation of the ideal. Until man in his heart is ready, a profound change of the world conditions cannot come; or it can only be brought about by force, physical force or else force of circumstances, and that leaves all the real work to be done. A frame may have then been made, but the soul will have still to grow into that mechanical body.

CHAPTER XXXIII

INTERNATIONALISM AND HUMAN UNITY

THE great necessity, then, and the great difficulty is to help this idea of humanity which is already at work upon our minds and has even begun in a very slight degree to influence from above our actions, and turn it into something more than an idea, however strong, to make it a central motive and a fixed part of our nature. Its satisfaction must become a necessity of our psychological being, just as the family idea or the national idea has become each a psychological motive with its own need of satisfaction. But how is this to be done? The family idea had the advantage of growing out of a primary vital need in our being and therefore it had not the least difficulty in becoming a psychological motive and need; for our readiest and strongest mental motives and psychological needs are those which grow out of our vital necessities and instincts. The clan and the tribe ideas had a similar origin, less primary and compelling, and therefore looser and more dissoluble; but still they arose from the vital necessity in human nature for aggregation and the ready basis given to it by the inevitable physical growth of the family into clan or tribe. These were natural aggregations, evolutionary forms already prepared on the animal level.

The nation idea, on the contrary, did not arise from a primary vital need, but from a secondary or even tertiary necessity which resulted not from anything inherent in our vital nature, but from circumstances, from environ-

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

mental evolution; it arose not from a vital, but from a geographical and historical necessity. And we notice that as one result it had to be created most commonly by force, force of circumstances partly, no doubt, but also by physical force, by the power of the king and the conquering tribe converted into a military and dominant State. Or else it came by a reaction against force, a revolt against conquest and domination that brought a slow or sudden compactness to peoples who, though geographically or even historically and culturally one, had lacked power of cohesion and remained too conscious of an original heterogeneity or of local and regional and other divisions. But still the necessity was there, and the nation form after many failures and false successes got into being, and the psychological motive of patriotism, a sign of the growth of a conscious national ego, arose in the form as the expression of its soul and the guarantee of its durability. For without such a soul, such a psychological force and presence within the frame, there can be no guarantee of durability. Without it, what circumstances have created, circumstances easily will destroy. It was for this reason that the ancient world failed to create nations, except on a small scale, little clans and small regional nations of brief duration and usually of loose structure; it created only artificial empires which went to pieces and left chaos behind them.

What then of this international unity now in the first obscure throes of the preformatory state resembling a ferment of cells drawing together for amalgamation? What is the compelling necessity behind it? If we look at outward things only, the necessity is much less direct and much less compelling than any that preceded it. There is here no vital necessity; mankind as a whole can get on well enough without international unity, so far

INTERNATIONALISM AND HUMAN UNITY

as mere living goes; it will not be at all a perfect, rational or ideal collective living of the race,—but after all where is there yet any element in human life or society which is perfect, rational or ideal? As yet at least none; still we get on somehow with life, because the vital man in us, who is the dominant element in our instincts and in our actions, cares for none of these things and is quite satisfied with any just tolerable or any precariously or partly agreeable form of living, because that is all to which he is accustomed and all therefore that he feels to be necessary. The men who are not satisfied, the thinkers, the idealists, are always a minority and in the end an ineffectual minority, because though always in the end they do get their way partly, their victory yet turns into a defeat; for the vital man remains still the majority and degrades the apparent success into a pitiful parody of their rational hope, their clear-sighted ideal or their strong counsel of perfection.

The geographical necessity for a unification of this kind does not exist, unless we consider that it has been created through the drawing closer together of the earth and its inhabitants by Science and her magical lessening of physical distances and attenuation of barriers. But whatever may happen in the future, this is as yet not sufficient; earth is still large enough and her divisions still real enough for her to do without any formal unity. If there is any strong need, it may be described—if such an epithet can be applied to a thing in the present and the future—as a historical necessity, that is, a need which has arisen as the result of certain actual circumstances that have grown up in the evolution of international relations. And that need is economic, political, mechanical, likely under certain circumstances to create some tentative or preliminary framework, but not at first a

psychological reality which will vivify the frame. Moreover, it is not yet sufficiently vital to be precisely a necessity; for it amounts mainly to a need for the removal of certain perils and inconveniences, such as the constant danger of war, and at most to the strong desirability of a better international co-ordination. But by itself this creates only a possibility, not even a moral certainty, of a first vague sketch and loose framework of unity which may or may not lead to something more close and real.

But there is another power than that of external circumstance which we have a right to take into consideration. For behind all the external circumstances and necessities of which we are more easily aware in Nature, there is always an internal necessity in the being, a will and a design in Nature itself which precedes the outward signals of its development and in spite of all obstacles and failures must in the long end inevitably get itself realised. Nowadays we can see this truth everywhere in Nature down to her lowest forms; a will in the very seed of the being, not quite conscious or only partially conscious in the form itself, but still present there in Nature. It is subconscious or even inconscient if you like, but it is still a blind will, a mute idea which contains beforehand the form it is going to create, is aware of a necessity other than the environmental, a necessity contained in the very being itself, and creates persistently and inevitably a form that best answers to the necessity, however we may labour to interfere with or thwart its operations.

This is true biologically, but it is also, though in a more subtle and variable way, psychologically true. Now the very nature of man is that of an individual who on one side is always emphasising and developing his individual being to the extent of his power but who is

also driven by the Idea or Truth within him to unify himself with others of his species, to join himself to them or agglutinate them to him, to create human groups, aggregates and collectivities. And if there is an aggregate or collectivity which it is possible for him to realise but is not yet realised, we may be sure that that too in the end he will create. This will in him is not always or often quite conscient or foreseeing; it is often largely subconscient, but even then it is eventually irresistible. And if it gets into his conscious mind, as the international idea has now done, we may count on a more rapid evolution. Such a will in Nature creates for itself favourable external circumstances and happenings or finds them created for it in the stress of events. And even if they are insufficient, she will still often use them beyond their apparent power of effectivity, not minding the possibility of failure, for she knows that in the end she will succeed and every experience of failure will help to better the eventual success.

Well then, it may be said, let us trust to this inevitable will in Nature and let us follow out her method of operation. Let us create anyhow this framework, any framework of the aggregate; for she knows already the complete form she intends and she will work out eventually in her own time by the power of the idea and our will to realise it, by help of strong force of circumstances, by pressure of all kinds, by physical force even, if need be, since that too seems still to be a part of her necessary machinery; let us create it. Let us have the body; the soul will grow in the body. And we need not mind if the bodily formation is artificial with at first a small or no conscious psychological reality to vivify it. That will begin to form itself as soon as the body has been formed;

for the nation too was at first more or less artificially formed out of incoherent elements actually brought together by the necessity of a subconscient idea, though apparently it was done only by physical force and the force of circumstances. As a national ego formed which identified itself with the geographical body of the nation and developed in it the psychological instinct of national unity and the need of its satisfaction, so a collective human ego will develop in the international body and will evolve in it the psychological instinct of human unity and the need of its satisfaction. That will be the guarantee of duration. And that possibly is how the thing will happen, man being what he is; indeed if we cannot do better, it will so happen, since happen somehow it must, whether in the worse way or the better.

It may be as well to review here briefly in the light of this consideration the main possibilities and powers which are shaping us towards such an end in the present world conditions. The old means of unification, conquest by a single great Power, which would reduce part of the world by force and bring the remaining nations into the condition of dependencies, protectorates and dependent allies, the whole forming the basic structure of a great final unification,—this was the character of the ancient Roman precedent,—does not seem immediately possible. It would require a great predominance of force simultaneously by sea and land,¹ an irresistibly superior science and organisation and with all this a constantly successful diplomacy and an invincible good fortune. If war and diplomacy are still to be the decisive factors in international politics in the future as in the past, it would be rash to predict that such a combination

¹Now also by air.

may not arise, and if other means fail, it must arise; for there is nothing that can be set down as impossible in the chances of the future, and the urge in Nature always creates its own means. But, at present, the possibilities of the future do not seem to point in this direction. There is, on the other hand, a very strong possibility of the whole earth, or at least the three continents of the eastern hemisphere, being dominated by three or four great empires largely increased in extent of dominion, spheres of influence, protectorates, and thereby exercising a pre-eminence which they could either maintain by agreements, avoiding all causes of conflict, or in a rivalry which would be the cause of fresh wars and changes. This would normally have been the result of the great European conflict.

But there has struck across this possibility a revived strength of the idea of nationality expressed in the novel formula of the principle of self-determination to which the great world-empires have had to pay at least a verbal homage. The idea of international unity to which this intervention of the revived force of nationality is leading, takes the form of a so-called League of Nations. Practically, however, the League of Nations under present conditions or any likely to be immediately realised would still mean the control of the earth by a few great Powers, —a control that would be checked only by the necessity of conciliating the sympathy and support of the more numerous smaller or less powerful nations. On the force and influence of these few would rest practically, if not admittedly, the decision of all important debatable questions. And without it there could be no chance of enforcing the decisions of the majority against any recalcitrant great Power or combination of Powers.

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

The growth of democratic institutions would perhaps help to minimise the chances of conflict and of the abuse of power,—though that is not at all certain; but it would not alter this real character of the combination.

In all this there is no immediate prospect of any such form of unification as would give room for a real psychological sense of unity, much less necessitate its growth. Such a form might evolve; but we should have to trust for it to the chapter of accidents or at best to the already declared urge in Nature expressed in the internationalist idea. On that side, there was at one time a possibility which seemed to be very suddenly and rapidly growing into something more, the emergence of a powerful party in all the advanced countries of the world pledged to internationalism, conscious of its necessity as a first condition for their other aims and more and more determined to give it precedence and to unite internationally to bring it about. That combination of the intellectuals with Labour which created the Socialist parties in Germany, Russia and Austria, formed anew recently the Labour party in England and has had its counterparts in most other European countries, seems to be travelling in that direction. This world-wide movement which made internationalism and Labour rule its two main principles, had already created the Russian revolution and seemed ready to bring about another great socialistic revolution in central Europe. It was conceivable that this party might everywhere draw together. By a chain of revolutions such as took place in the nineteenth century and of less violent but still rapid evolutions brought about by the pressure of their example, or even by simply growing into the majority in each country, the party might control Europe. It might create counterparts of itself

in all the American republics and in Asiatic countries. It might by using the machinery of the League of Nations or, where necessary, by physical force or economic or other pressure persuade or compel all the nations into some more stringent system of international unification. A World-State or else a close confederation of democratic peoples might be created with a common governing body for the decision of principles and for all generally important affairs or at least for all properly international affairs and problems; a common law of the nations might grow up and international courts to administer it and some kind of system of international police control to maintain and enforce it. In this way, by the general victory of an idea, Socialism seeking to organise humanity according to its own model or by any other yet unforeseen way, a sufficient formal unity might come into existence.

The question then arises, how out of this purely formal unity a real psychological unity can be created and whether it can be made a living oneness. For a mere formal, mechanical, administrative, political and economic union does not necessarily create a psychological unity. None of the great empires have yet succeeded in doing that, and even in the Roman where some sense of unity did come into being, it was nothing very close and living; it could not withstand all shocks from within and without, it could not prevent what was much more dangerous, the peril of decay and devitalisation which the diminution of the natural elements of free variation and helpful struggle brought with it. A complete world-union would have indeed this advantage that it would have no need to fear forces from without, for no such forces would any longer exist. But this very absence of

outer pressure might well give greater room and power to internal elements of disintegration and still more to the opportunities of decay. It might indeed for a long time foster an internal intellectual and political activity and social progress which would keep it living; but this principle of progress would not be always secure against a natural tendency to exhaustion and stagnation which every diminution of variety and even the very satisfaction of social and economic well-being might well hasten. Disruption of unity would then be necessary to restore humanity to life. Again, while the Roman Empire appealed only to the idea of Roman unity, an artificial and accidental principle, this World-State would appeal to the idea of human unity, a real and vital principle. But if the idea of unity can appeal to the human mind, so too can the idea of separative life, for both address themselves to vital instincts of his nature. What guarantee will there be that the latter will not prevail when man has once tried unity and finds perhaps that its advantages do not satisfy his whole nature? Only the growth of some very powerful psychological factor will make unity necessary to him, whatever other changes and manipulations might be desirable to satisfy his other needs and instincts.

The formal unification of mankind would come in upon us in the shape of a system which would be born, grow, come to its culmination. But every system by the very nature of things tends after its culmination to decay and die. To prevent the organism decaying and dying there must be such a psychological reality within as will persist and survive all changes of its body. Nations have that in a sort of collective national ego which persists through all vital changes. But this ego is not

by any means self-existent and immortal; it supports itself on certain things with which it is identified. There is the geographical body, the country; the common interests of all who inhabit the same country, defence, economic well-being and progress, political liberty; thirdly, a common name, sentiment, culture. But we have to mark that this national ego owes its life to the coalescence of the separative instinct and the instinct of unity; for the nation feels itself one as distinguished from other nations; it owes its vitality to interchange with them and struggle with them in all the activities of its nature. Nor are all these altogether sufficient; there is a deeper factor. There must be a sort of religion of country, a constant even if not always explicit recognition not only of the sacredness of the physical mother, the land, but also, in however obscure a way, of the nation as a collective soul which it is the first duty and need of every man to keep alive, to defend from suppression or mortal attaint or, if suppressed, then to watch, wait and struggle for its release and rehabilitation, if sicklied over with the touch of any fatal spiritual ailment, then to labour always to heal and revivify and save alive.

The World-State will give its inhabitants the great advantages of peace, economic well-being, general security, combination for intellectual, cultural, social activity and progress. None of these are in themselves sufficient to create the thing needed. Peace and security we all desire at present, because we have them not in sufficiency; but we must remember that man has also within him the need of combat, adventure, struggle, almost requires these for his growth and healthy living; that instinct would be largely suppressed by a universal peace and a flat security and it might rise up successfully against

suppression. Economic well-being by itself cannot permanently satisfy and the price paid for it might be so heavy as to diminish its appeal and value. The human instinct for liberty, individual and national, might well be a constant menace to the World-State, unless it so skilfully arranged its system as to give them sufficient free play. A common intellectual and cultural activity and progress may do much, but need not by themselves be sufficient to bring into being the fully powerful psychological factor that would be required. And the collective ego created would have to rely on the instinct of unity alone; for it would be in conflict with the separative instinct which gives the national ego half its vitality.

It is not impossible that the indispensable inner factor for this outer frame might be increasingly created, in its very process of growth, but certain psychological elements would have to be present in great strength. There would be needed, to make the change persist, a religion of humanity or an equivalent sentiment much more powerful, explicit, self-conscious, universal in its appeal than the nationalist's religion of country; the clear recognition by man in all his thought and life of a single soul in humanity of which each man and each people is an incarnation and soul-form; an ascension of man beyond the principle of ego which lives by separativeness,—and yet there must be no destruction of individuality, for without that man would stagnate; a principle and arrangement of the common life which would give free play to the individual variation, interchange in diversity and the need of adventure and conquest by which the soul of man lives and grows great, and sufficient means of expressing all the resultant complex life and growth in a flexible and progressive form of human society.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

A RELIGION of humanity may be either an intellectual and sentimental ideal, a living dogma with intellectual, psychological and practical effects, or else a spiritual aspiration and rule of living, and partly the sign, partly the cause of a change of soul in humanity. The intellectual religion of humanity already to a certain extent exists, partly as a conscious creed in the minds of a few, partly as a potent shadow in the consciousness of the race. It is the shadow of a spirit that is yet unborn, but is preparing for its birth. This material world of ours, besides its fully embodied things of the present, is peopled by such powerful shadows, ghosts of things dead and the spirit of things yet unborn. The ghosts of things dead are very troublesome actualities and they now abound, ghosts of dead religions, dead arts, dead moralities, dead political theories, which still claim either to keep their rotting bodies or to animate partly the existing body of things. Repeating obstinately their sacred formulas of the past, they hypnotise backward-looking minds and daunt even the progressive portion of humanity. But there are too those unborn spirits which are still unable to take a definite body, but are already mind-born and exist as influences of which the human mind is aware and to which it now responds in a desultory and confused fashion. The religion of humanity was mind-born in the eighteenth

century, the *mānasa putra*¹ of the rationalist thinkers who brought it forward as a substitute for the formal spiritualism of ecclesiastical Christianity. It tried to give itself a body in Positivism, which was an attempt to formulate the dogmas of this religion, but on too heavily and severely rationalistic a basis for acceptance even by an Age of Reason. Humanitarianism has been its most prominent emotional result. Philanthropy, social service and other kindred activities have been its outward expression of good works. Democracy, socialism, pacificism are to a great extent its by-products or at least owe much of their vigour to its inner presence.

The fundamental idea is that mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress of the human being and human life are the chief duty and chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the State, the family nor anything else ought to take its place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of the human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid its self-manifestation. But where the cult of these idols seeks to usurp the place of the spirit and makes demands inconsistent with its service, they should be put aside. No injunctions of old creeds, religious, political, social or cultural, are valid when they go against its claims. Science even, though it is one of the chief modern idols, must not be allowed to make claims contrary to its ethical temperament and aim, for science is only valuable in so far as it helps and serves by knowledge and progress the religion of humanity. War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty

¹Mind-born child, an idea and expression of Indian Puranic cosmology.

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest, the oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class, of nation by nation and all those habits of life and institutions of society of a similar kind which religion and ethics formerly tolerated or even favoured in practice, whatever they might do in their ideal rule or creed, are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated. Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity.

One has only to compare human life and thought and feeling a century or two ago with human life, thought and feeling in the pre-war period to see how great an influence

this religion of humanity has exercised and how fruitful a work it has done. It accomplished rapidly many things which orthodox religion failed to do effectively, largely because it acted as a constant intellectual and critical solvent, an unsparing assailant of the thing that is and an unflinching champion of the thing to be, faithful always to the future, while orthodox religion allied itself with the powers of the present, even of the past, bound itself by its pact with them and could act only at best as a moderating but not as a reforming force. Moreover, this religion has faith in humanity and its earthly future and can therefore aid its earthly progress, while the orthodox religions looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter. Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, and this religion of humanity, even without taking bodily shape or a compelling form or a visible means of self-effectuation, was yet able to effect comparatively much of what it set out to do. It, to some degree, humanised society, humanised law and punishment, humanised the outlook of man on man, abolished legalised torture and the cruder forms of slavery, raised those who were depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions. It had almost succeeded in humanising war and would perhaps have succeeded entirely but for the contrary trend of modern Science. It made it possible for man to conceive of a world free from war as imaginable

even without waiting for the Christian millennium. At any rate, this much change came about that, while peace was formerly a rare interlude of constant war, war became an interlude, if a much too frequent interlude of peace, though as yet only of an armed peace. That may not be a great step, but still it was a step forward. It gave new conceptions of the dignity of the human being and opened new ideas and new vistas of his education, self-development and potentiality. It spread enlightenment; it made man feel more his responsibility for the progress and happiness of the race; it raised the average self-respect and capacity of mankind; it gave hope to the serf, self-assertion to the down-trodden and made the labourer in his manhood the potential equal of the rich and powerful. True, if we compare what is with what should be, the actual achievement with the ideal, all this will seem only a scanty work of preparation. But it was a remarkable record for a century and a half or a little more and for an unembodied spirit which had to work through what instruments it could find and had as yet no form, habitation or visible engine of its own concentrated workings. But perhaps it was in this that lay its power and advantage, since that saved it from crystallising into a form and getting petrified or at least losing its more free and subtle action.

But still in order to accomplish all its future, this idea and religion of humanity has to make itself more explicit, insistent and categorically imperative. For otherwise it can only work with clarity in the minds of the few and with the mass it will be only a modifying influence, but will not be the rule of human life. And so long as that is so, it cannot entirely prevail over its own principal enemy. That enemy, the enemy of all real religion, is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism

of class and nation. These it could for a time soften, modify, force to curb their more arrogant, open and brutal expressions, oblige to adopt better institutions, but not to give place to the love of mankind, not to recognise a real unity between man and man. For that essentially must be the aim of the religion of humanity, as it must be the earthly aim of all human religion, love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness and practice of human oneness in thought, feeling and life, the ideal which was expressed first some thousands of years ago in the ancient Vedic hymn and must always remain the highest injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. Till that is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. With that done, the one necessary psychological change will have been effected without which no formal and mechanical, no political and administrative unity can be real and secure. If it is done, that outward unification may not even be indispensable or, if indispensable, it will come about naturally, not as now it seems likely to be, by catastrophic means, but by the demand of the human mind, and will be held secure by an essential need of our perfected and developed human nature.

But this is the question whether a purely intellectual and sentimental religion of humanity will be sufficient to bring about so great a change in our psychology. The weakness of the intellectual idea, even when it supports itself by an appeal to the sentiments and emotions, is that it does not get at the centre of man's being. The intellect and the feelings are only instruments of the being and they may be the instruments of either its lower external form or of the inner and higher man, servants of the ego or channels of the soul. The aim of the religion

of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so much proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward and mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at the best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal liberty, equality and mutual help in an equal association.

But though these aims are of great importance in their own field, they are not the central thing; they can only be secure when founded upon a change of the inner human nature and inner way of living; they are themselves of importance only as means for giving a greater scope and a better field for man's development towards

that change and, when it is once achieved, as an outward expression of the larger inward life. Freedom, equality, brotherhood are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego. When the ego claims liberty, it arrives at competitive individualism. When it asserts equality, it arrives first at strife, then at an attempt to ignore the variations of Nature, and, as the sole way of doing that successfully, it constructs an artificial and machine-made society. A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature. All that it knows is association for the pursuit of common egoistic ends and the utmost that it can arrive at is a closer organisation for the equal distribution of labour, production, consumption and enjoyment.

Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a

common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.

CHAPTER XXXV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In other words,—and this is the conclusion at which we arrive,—while it is possible to construct a precarious and quite mechanical unity by political and administrative means, the unity of the human race, even if achieved, can only be secured and can only be made real if the religion of humanity, which is at present the highest active ideal of mankind, spiritualises itself and becomes the general inner law of human life.

The outward unity may well achieve itself,—possibly, though by no means certainly, in a measurable time,—because that is the inevitable final trend of the working of Nature in human society which makes for larger and yet larger aggregations and cannot fail to arrive at a total aggregation of mankind in a closer international system.

This working of Nature depends for its means of fulfilment upon two forces which combine to make the larger aggregation inevitable. First, there is the increasing closeness of common interests or at least the interlacing and interrelation of interests in a larger and yet larger circle which makes old divisions an obstacle and a cause of weakness, obstruction and friction, and the clash and collision that comes out of this friction a ruinous calamity to all, even to the victor who has to pay a too heavy price for his gains; and even these expected gains,

as war becomes more complex and disastrous, are becoming more and more difficult to achieve and the success problematical. An increasing perception of this community or interrelation of interests and a growing unwillingness to face the consequences of collision and ruinous struggle must push men to welcome any means for mitigating the divisions which lead to such disasters. If the trend to the mitigation of divisions is once given a definite form, that commences an impetus which drives towards closer and closer union. If she cannot arrive by these means, if the incoherence is too great for the trend of unification to triumph, Nature will use other means, such as war and conquest or the temporary domination of a powerful State or empire or the menace of such a domination which will compel those threatened to adopt a closer system of union. It is these means and this force of outward necessity which she used to create nation-units and national empires, and, however modified in the circumstances and workings, it is at bottom the same force and the same means which she is using to drive mankind towards international unification.

But, secondly, there is the force of a common uniting sentiment. This may work in two ways; it may come before as an originating or contributory cause or it may come afterwards as a cementing result. In the first case, the sentiment of a larger unity springs up among units which were previously divided and leads them to seek after a form of union which may then be brought about principally by the force of the sentiment and its idea or by that secondarily as an aid to other and more outward events and causes. We may note that in earlier times this sentiment was insufficiently effective, as among the petty clan or regional nations; unity had

ordinarily to be effected by outward circumstances and generally by the grossest of them, by war and conquest, by the domination of the most powerful among many warring or contiguous peoples. But in later times the force of the sentiment of unity, supported as it has been by a clearer political idea, has become more effective. The larger national aggregates have grown up by a simple act of federation or union, though this has sometimes had to be preceded by a common struggle for liberty or a union in war against a common enemy; so have grown into one the United States, Italy, Germany, and more peacefully the Australian and South African federations. But in other cases, especially in the earlier national aggregations, the sentiment of unity has grown up largely or entirely as the result of the formal, outward or mechanical union. But whether to form or to preserve the growth of the sentiment, the psychological factor is indispensable; without it there can be no secure and lasting union. Its absence, the failure to create such a sentiment or to make it sufficiently living, natural, forcible has been the cause of the precariousness of such aggregates as Austro-Hungary and of the ephemeral character of the empires of the past, even as it is likely to bring about, unless circumstances change, the collapse or disintegration of the great present-day empires.

The trend of forces towards some kind of international world-organisation eventuating in a possible far-off unification, which is now just beginning to declare itself as an idea or aspiration though the causes which made it inevitable have been for some time at work, is enforced by the pressure of need and environment, by outward circumstances. At the same time, there is a sentiment helped and stimulated by these outward circumstances,

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

a cosmopolitan, international sentiment, still rather nebulous and vaguely ideal, which may accelerate the growth of the formal union. In itself this sentiment would be an insufficient cement for the preservation of any mechanical union which might be created; for it could not easily be so close and forcible a sentiment as national feeling. It would have to subsist on the conveniences of union as its only substantial provender. But the experience of the past shows that this mere necessity of convenience is in the end not strong enough to resist the pressure of unfavourable circumstances and the reassertion of old or the effective growth of new centrifugal forces. There is, however, at work a more powerful force, a sort of intellectual religion of humanity, clear in the minds of the few, vaguely felt in its effects and its disguises by the many, which has largely helped to bring about much of the trend of the modern mind and the drift of its developing institutions. This is a psychological force which tends to break beyond the formula of the nation and aspires to replace the religion of country and even, in its more extreme forms, to destroy altogether the national sentiment and to abolish its divisions so as to create the single nation of mankind.

We may say, then, that this trend must eventually realise itself, however great may be the difficulties; and they are really enormous, much greater than those which attended the national formation. If the present unsatisfactory condition of international relations should lead to a series of cataclysms, either large and world-embracing like the present war or, though each more limited in scope, yet in their sum world-pervading and necessarily, by the growing interrelation of interests, affecting even those who do not fall directly under their touch, then

mankind will finally be forced in self-defence to a new, closer and more stringently unified order of things. Its choice will be between that and a lingering suicide. If the human reason cannot find out the way, Nature herself is sure to shape these upheavals in such a way as to bring about her end. Therefore—whether soon or in the long run, whether brought about by its own growing sentiment of unity, stimulated by common interest and convenience, or by the evolutionary pressure of circumstances,—we may take it that an eventual unification or at least some formal organisation of human life on earth is, the incalculable being always allowed for, practically inevitable.

I have tried to show from the analogy of the past evolution of the nation that this international unification must culminate or at least is likely to culminate in one of two forms. There is likely to be either a centralised World-State or a looser world-union which may be either a close federation or a simple confederacy of the peoples for the common ends of mankind. The last form is the most desirable, because it gives sufficient scope for the principle of variation which is necessary for the free play of life and the healthy progress of the race. The process by which the World-State may come starts with the creation of a central body which will at first have very limited functions, but, once created, must absorb by degrees all the different utilities of a centralised international control, as the State, first in the form of a monarchy and then of a parliament, has been absorbing by degrees the whole control of the life of the nation, so that we are now within measurable distance of a centralised socialistic State which will leave no part of the life of its individuals unregulated. A similar process in

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

the World-State will end in the taking up and the regulation of the whole life of the peoples into its hands; it may even end by abolishing national individuality and turning the divisions that it has created into mere departmental groupings, provinces and districts of the one common State. Such an eventuality may seem now a fantastic dream or an unrealisable idea; but it is one which, under certain conditions that are by no means beyond the scope of ultimate possibility, may well become feasible and even, after a certain point is reached, inevitable. A federal system and still more a confederacy would mean, on the other hand, the preservation of the national basis and a greater or less freedom of national life, but the subordination of the separate national to the larger common interests and of full separate freedom to the greater international necessities.

It may be questioned whether past analogies are a safe guide in a problem so new and whether something else might not be evolved more intimately and independently arising from it and suitable to its complexities. But mankind even in dealing with its new problems works upon past experience and therefore upon past motives and analogies. Even when it seizes on new ideas, it goes to the past for the form it gives to them. Behind the apparent changes of the most radical revolutions we see this unavoidable principle of continuity surviving in the heart of the new order. Moreover, these alternatives seem the only way in which the two forces in presence can work out their conflict, either by the disappearance of the one, the separative national instinct, or by an accommodation between them. On the other hand, it is quite possible that human thought and action may take so new a turn as to bring in a number of unforeseen

possibilities and lead to a quite different ending. And one might upon these lines set one's imagination to work and produce perhaps a utopia of a better kind. Such constructive efforts of the human imagination have their value and often a very great value; but any such speculations would evidently have been out of place in the study I have attempted.

Assuredly, neither of the two alternatives and none of the three forms considered are free from serious objections. A centralised World-State would signify the triumph of the idea of mechanical unity or rather of uniformity. It would inevitably mean the undue depression of an indispensable element in the vigour of human life and progress, the free life of the individual, the free variation of the peoples. It must end, if it becomes permanent and fulfils all its tendencies, either in a death in life, a stagnation, or by the insurgence of some new saving but revolutionary force or principle which would shatter the whole fabric into pieces. The mechanical tendency is one to which the logical reason of man, itself a "precise machine, is easily addicted and its operations are obviously the easiest to manage and the most ready to hand; its full evolution may seem to the reason desirable, necessary, inevitable, but its end is predestined. A centralised socialistic State may be a necessity of the future, once it is founded, but a reaction from it will be equally an eventual necessity of the future. The greater its pressure, the more certainly will it be met by spread of the spiritual, the intellectual, the vital and practical principle of Anarchism in revolt against that mechanical pressure. So, too, a centralised mechanical World-State must rouse in the end a similar force against it and might well terminate in a crumbling up and

disintegration, even in the necessity for a repetition of the cycle of humanity ending in a better attempt to solve the problem. It could be kept in being only if humanity agreed to allow all the rest of its life to be regularised for it for the sake of peace and stability and took refuge for its individual freedom in the spiritual life, as happened once under the Roman Empire. But even that would be only a temporary solution. A federal system also would tend inevitably to establish one general type for human life, institutions and activities; it could allow only a play of minor variations. But the need of variation in living Nature could not always rest satisfied with that scanty sustenance. On the other hand, a looser confederacy might well be open to the objection that it would give too ready a handle for centrifugal forces, were such to arise in new strength. A loose confederation could not be permanent; it must turn in one direction or the other, end either in a close and rigid centralisation or at least by a break-up of the loose unity into its original elements.

The saving power needed is a new psychological factor which will at once make a united life necessary to humanity and force it to respect the principle of freedom. The religion of humanity seems to be the one growing force which tends in that direction; for it makes for the sense of human oneness, it has the idea of the race, and yet at the same time it respects the human individual and the natural human grouping. But its present intellectual form seems hardly sufficient. The idea, powerful in itself and in its effects, is yet not powerful enough to mould the whole life of the race in its image. For it has to concede too much to the egoistic side of human nature, once all and still nine-tenths of our being, with which its larger idea is in conflict. On the other side,

because it leans principally on the reason, it turns too readily to the mechanical solution. For the rational idea ends always as a captive of its machinery, becomes a slave of its own too binding process. A new idea with another turn of the logical machine revolts against it and breaks up the machinery, but only to substitute in the end another mechanical system, another credo, formula and practice.

A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of co-operation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness

be founded. There must be too a discipline and a way of salvation in accordance with this religion, that is to say, a means by which it can be developed by each man within himself, so that it may be developed in the life of the race. To go into all that this implies would be too large a subject to be entered upon here; it is enough to point out that in this direction lies the eventual road. No doubt, if this is only an idea like the rest, it will go the way of all ideas. But if it is at all a truth of our being, then it must be the truth to which all is moving and in it must be found the means of a fundamental, an inner, a complete, a real human unity which would be the one secure base of a unification of human life. A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence.

Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of unification in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realise this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent,—perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing,—the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection.

CHAPTER XXXVI

A POSTSCRIPT CHAPTER

At the time when this book was being brought to its close, the first attempt at the foundation of some initial hesitating beginning of the new world-order, which both governments and peoples had begun to envisage as a permanent necessity if there was to be any order in the world at all, was under debate and consideration but had not yet been given a concrete and practical form; but this had to come and eventually a momentous beginning was made. It took the name and appearance of what was called a League of Nations. It was not happy in its conception, well-inspired in its formation or destined to any considerable longevity or a supremely successful career. But that such an organised endeavour should be launched at all and proceed on its way for some time without an early breakdown was in itself an event of capital importance and meant the initiation of a new era in world history; especially, it was an initiative which, even if it failed, could not be allowed to remain without a sequel but had to be taken up again until a successful solution has safeguarded the future of mankind, not only against continued disorder and lethal peril but against destructive possibilities which could easily prepare the collapse of civilisation and perhaps eventually something even that could be described as the suicide of the human race. Accordingly, the League of Nations disappeared

but was replaced by the United Nations Organisation which now stands in the forefront of the world and struggles towards some kind of secure permanence and success in the stupendous endeavour on which depends the world's future.

This is the capital event, the crucial and decisive outcome of the world-wide tendencies which Nature has set in motion for her destined purpose. In spite of the constant shortcomings of human effort and its stumbling mentality, in spite of adverse possibilities that may baulk or delay for a time the success of this great adventure, it is in this event that lies the determination of what must be. All the catastrophes that have attended this course of events and seem to arise of purpose in order to prevent the working out of her intention have not prevented, and even further catastrophes will not prevent, the successful emergence and development of an enterprise which has become a necessity for the progress and perhaps the very existence of the race. Two stupendous and world-devastating wars have swept over the globe and have been accompanied or followed by revolutions with far-reaching consequences which have altered the political map of the earth and the international balance, the once fairly stable equilibrium of five continents, and changed the whole future. A third still more disastrous war with a prospect of the use of weapons and other scientific means of destruction far more fatal and of wider reach than any ever yet invented, weapons whose far-spread use might bring down civilisation with a crash and whose effects might tend towards something like extermination on a large scale, looms in prospect; the constant apprehension of it weighs upon the mind of the nations and stimulates them towards further prepara-

tions for war and creates an atmosphere of prolonged antagonism, if not yet of conflict, extending to what is called "cold war" even in times of peace. But the two wars that have come and gone have not prevented the formation of the first and second considerable efforts towards the beginning of an attempt at union and the practical formation of a concrete body, an organised instrument with that object: rather they have caused and hastened this new creation. The League of Nations came into being as a direct consequence of the first war, the U. N. O. similarly as a consequence of the second world-wide conflict. If the third war which is regarded by many if not by most as inevitable does come, it is likely to precipitate as inevitably a further step and perhaps the final outcome of this great world-endeavour. Nature uses such means, apparently opposed and dangerous to her intended purpose, to bring about the fruition of that purpose. As in the practice of the spiritual science and art of Yoga one has to raise up the psychological possibilities which are there in the nature and stand in the way of its spiritual perfection and fulfilment so as to eliminate them, even, it may be, the sleeping possibilities which might arise in future to break the work that has been done, so too Nature acts with the world-forces that meet her on her way, not only calling up those which will assist her but raising too, so as to finish with them, those that she knows to be the normal or even the unavoidable obstacles which cannot but start up to impede her secret will. This one has often seen in the history of mankind; one sees it exemplified today with an enormous force commensurable with the magnitude of the thing that has to be done. But always these resistances turn out to have assisted by the

resistance much more than they have impeded the intention of the great Creatrix and her Mover.

We may then look with a legitimate optimism on what has been hitherto achieved and on the prospects of further achievement in the future. This optimism need not and should not blind us to undesirable features, perilous tendencies and the possibilities of serious interruptions in the work and even disorders in the human world that might possibly subvert the work done. As regards the actual conditions of the moment it may even be admitted that most men nowadays look with dissatisfaction on the defects of the United Nations Organisation and its blunders and the malignancies that endanger its existence and many feel a growing pessimism and regard with doubt the possibility of its final success. This pessimism it is unnecessary and unwise to share; for such a psychology tends to bring about or to make possible the results which it predicts but which need not at all ensue. At the same time, we must not ignore the danger. The leaders of the nations, who have the will to succeed and who will be held responsible by posterity for any avoidable failure, must be on guard against unwise policies or fatal errors; the deficiencies that exist in the organisation or its constitution have to be quickly remedied or slowly and cautiously eliminated; if there are obstinate oppositions to necessary change, they have somehow to be overcome or circumvented without breaking the institution; progress towards its perfection, even if it cannot be easily or swiftly made, must yet be undertaken and the frustration of the world's hope prevented at any cost. There is no other way for mankind than this, unless indeed a greater way is laid open to it by the Power that guides through some delivering turn or change in human

will or human nature or some sudden evolutionary progress, a not easily foreseeable leap, *saltus*, which will make another and greater solution of our human destiny feasible.

In the first idea and form of a beginning of world-union which took the shape of the League of Nations, although there were errors in the structure such as the insistence on unanimity which tended to sterilise, to limit or to obstruct the practical action and effectuality of the League, the main defect was inherent in its conception and in its general build, and that again arose naturally and as a direct consequence from the condition of the world at that time. The League of Nations was in fact an oligarchy of big Powers each drawing behind it a retinue of small States and using the general body so far as possible for the furtherance of its own policy much more than for the general interest and the good of the world at large. This character came out most in the political sphere, and the manoeuvres and discords, accommodations and compromises inevitable in this condition of things did not help to make the action of the League beneficial or effective as it purposed or set out to be. The absence of America and the position of Russia had helped to make the final ill-success of this first venture a natural consequence, if not indeed unavoidable. In the constitution of the U. N. O. an attempt was made, in principle at least, to escape from these errors; but the attempt was not thorough-going and not altogether successful. A strong surviving element of oligarchy remained in the preponderant place assigned to the five great Powers in the Security Council and was clinched by the device of the veto; these were concessions to a sense of realism and the necessity of recognising the

actual condition of things and the results of the second great war and could not perhaps have been avoided, but they have done more to create trouble, hamper the action and diminish the success of the new institution than anything else in its make-up or the way of action forced upon it by the world situation or the difficulties of a combined working inherent in its very structure. A too hasty or radical endeavour to get rid of these defects might lead to a crash of the whole edifice; to leave them unmodified prolongs a malaise, an absence of harmony and smooth working and a consequent discredit and a sense of limited and abortive action, cause of the wide-spread feeling of futility and regard of doubt the world at large has begun to cast on this great and necessary institution which was founded with such high hopes and without which world conditions would be infinitely worse and more dangerous, even perhaps irremediable. A third attempt, the substitution of a differently constituted body, could only come if this institution collapsed as the result of a new catastrophe: if certain dubious portents fulfil their menace, it might emerge into being and might even this time be more successful because of an increased and a more general determination not to allow such a calamity to occur again; but it would be after a third cataclysmal struggle which might shake to its foundations the international structure now holding together after two upheavals with so much difficulty and unease. Yet, even in such a contingency, the intention in the working of Nature is likely to overcome the obstacles she has herself raised up and they may be got rid of once and for all. But for that it will be necessary to build, eventually at least, a true World-State without exclusions and on a

principle of equality into which considerations of size and strength will not enter. These may be left to exercise whatever influence is natural to them in a well-ordered harmony of the world's peoples safeguarded by the law of a new international order. A sure justice, a fundamental equality and combination of rights and interests must be the law of this World-State and the basis of its entire edifice.

The real danger at the present second stage of the progress towards unity lies not in any faults, however serious, in the building of the United Nations Assembly but in the division of the peoples into two camps which tend to be natural opponents and might at any moment become declared enemies irreconcilable and even their common existence incompatible. This is because the so-called Communism of Bolshevik Russia came to birth as the result, not of a rapid evolution, but of an unprecedentedly fierce and prolonged revolution sanguinary in the extreme and created an autocratic and intolerant State system founded upon a war of classes in which all others except the proletariat were crushed out of existence, "liquidated" upon a "dictatorship of the proletariat" or rather of a narrow but all-powerful party system acting in its name, a Police State, and a mortal struggle with the outside world: the fierceness of this struggle generated in the minds of the organisers of the new State a fixed idea of the necessity not only of survival but of continued struggle and the spread of its domination until the new order had destroyed the old or evicted it, if not from the whole earth, yet from the greater part of it and the imposition of a new political and social gospel or its general acceptance by the world's peoples. But this condition of things might change, lose its acrimony

and full consequence, as it has done to some degree, with the arrival of security and the cessation of the first ferocity, bitterness and exasperation of the conflict; the most intolerant and oppressive elements of the new order might have been moderated and the sense of incompatibility or inability to live together or side by side would then have disappeared and a more secure *modus vivendi* been made possible. If much of the unease, the sense of inevitable struggle, the difficulty of mutual toleration and economic accommodation still exists, it is rather because the idea of using the ideological struggle as a means for world domination is there and keeps the nations in a position of mutual apprehension and preparation for armed defence and attack than because the coexistence of the two ideologies is impossible. If this element is eliminated, a world in which these two ideologies could live together, arrive at an economic interchange, draw closer together, need not be at all out of the question; for the world is moving towards a greater development of the principle of State control over the life of the community, and a congeries of socialistic States on the one hand, and on the other, of States co-ordinating and controlling a modified Capitalism might well come to exist side by side and develop friendly relations with each other. Even a World-State in which both could keep their own institutions and sit in a common assembly might come into being and a single world-union on this foundation would not be impossible. This development is indeed the final outcome which the foundation of the U.N.O. presupposes; for the present organisation cannot be itself final, it is only an imperfect beginning useful and necessary as a primary nucleus of that larger institution in which all the peoples

of the earth can meet each other in a single international unity: the creation of a World-State is, in a movement of this kind, the one logical and inevitable ultimate outcome.

This view of the future may under present circumstances be stigmatised as a too facile optimism, but this turn of things is quite as possible as the more disastrous turn expected by the pessimists, since the cataclysm and crash of civilisation sometimes predicted by them need not at all be the result of a new war. Mankind has a habit of surviving the worst catastrophes created by its own errors or by the violent turns of Nature and it must be so if there is any meaning in its existence, if its long history and continuous survival is not the accident of a fortuitously self-organising Chance, which it must be in a purely materialistic view of the nature of the world. If man is intended to survive and carry forward the evolution of which he is at present the head and, to some extent, a half-conscious leader of its march, he must come out of his present chaotic international life and arrive at a beginning of organised united action; some kind of World-State, unitary or federal, or a confederacy or a coalition he must arrive at in the end; no smaller or looser expedient would adequately serve the purpose. In that case, the general thesis advanced in this book would stand justified and we can foreshadow with some confidence the main line of advance which the course of events is likely to take in, at least the main trend of the future history of the human peoples.

The question now put by evolving Nature to mankind is whether its existing international system, if system it can be called, a sort of provisional order maintained with constant evolutionary or revolutionary changes, cannot be replaced by a willed and thought-out fixed

arrangement, a true system, eventually a real unity serving all the common interests of the earth's peoples. An original welter and chaos with its jumble of forces forming, wherever it could, larger or smaller masses of civilisation and order which were in danger of crumbling or being shaken to pieces by attacks from the outer chaos was the first attempt at cosmos successfully arrived at by the genius of humanity. This was finally replaced by something like an international system with the elements of what could be called international law or fixed habits of intercommunication and interchange which allowed the nations to live together in spite of antagonisms and conflicts, a security alternating with precariousness and peril and permitting of too many ugly features, however local, of oppression, bloodshed, revolt and disorder, not to speak of wars which sometimes devastated large areas of the globe. The indwelling deity who presides over the destiny of the race has raised in man's mind and heart the idea, the hope of a new order which will replace the old unsatisfactory order, and substitute for it conditions of the world's life which will in the end have a reasonable chance of establishing permanent peace and well-being. This would for the first time turn into an assured fact the ideal of human unity which, cherished by a few, seemed for so long a noble chimera; then might be created a firm ground of peace and harmony and even a free room for the realisation of the highest human dreams, for the perfectibility of the race, a perfect society, a higher upward evolution of the human soul and human nature. It is for the men of our days and, at the most, of tomorrow to give the answer. For, too long a postponement or too continued a failure will open the way to a series of increasing

catastrophes which might create a too prolonged and disastrous confusion and chaos and render a solution too difficult or impossible; it might even end in something like an irremediable crash not only of the present world-civilisation but of all civilisation. A new, a difficult and uncertain beginning might have to be made in the midst of the chaos and ruin after perhaps an extermination on a large scale, and a more successful creation could be predicted only if a way was found to develop a better humanity or perhaps a greater, a superhuman race.

The central question is whether the nation, the largest natural unit which humanity has been able to create and maintain for its collective living, is also its last and ultimate unit or whether a greater aggregate can be formed which will englobe many and even most nations and finally all in its united totality. The impulse to build more largely, the push towards the creation of considerable and even very vast supra-national aggregates has not been wanting; it has even been a permanent feature in the life-instincts of the race. But the form it took was the desire of a strong nation for mastery over others, permanent possession of their territories, subjugation of their peoples, exploitation of their resources: there was also an attempt at quasi-assimilation, an imposition of the culture of a dominant race and, in general, a system of absorption wholesale or as complete as possible. The Roman Empire was the classic example of this kind of endeavour and the Graeco-Roman unity of a single way of life and culture in a vast framework of political and administrative unity was the nearest approach within the geographical limits reached by this civilisation to something one might regard as a first figure or an incomplete suggestion of a figure of human unity. Other

similar attempts have been made though not on so large a scale and with a less consummate ability throughout the course of history, but nothing has endured for more than a small number of centuries. The method used was fundamentally unsound in as much as it contradicted other life-instincts which were necessary to the vitality and healthy evolution of mankind and the denial of which must end in some kind of stagnation and arrested progress. The imperial aggregate could not acquire the unconquerable vitality and power of survival of the nation-unit. The only enduring empire-units have been in reality large nation-units which took that name like Germany and China and these were not forms of the supranational State and need not be reckoned in the history of the formation of the imperial aggregate. So, although the tendency to the creation of empire testifies to an urge in Nature towards larger unities of human life,—and we can see concealed in it a will to unite the disparate masses of humanity on a larger scale into a single coalescing or combined life-unit—it must be regarded as an unsuccessful formation without a sequel and unserviceable for any further progress in this direction. In actual fact a new attempt of world-wide domination could succeed only by a new instrumentation or under novel circumstances in englobing all the nations of the earth or persuading or forcing them into some kind of union. An ideology, a successful combination of peoples with one aim and a powerful head like Communist Russia, might have a temporary success in bringing about such an objective. But such an outcome, not very desirable in itself, would not be likely to ensure the creation of an enduring World-State. There would be tendencies, resistances, urges towards other developments which would

sooner or later bring about its collapse or some revolutionary change which would mean its disappearance. Finally, any such stage would have to be overpassed; only the formation of a true World-State, either of a unitary but still elastic kind,—for a rigidly unitary State might bring about stagnation and decay of the springs of life,—or a union of free peoples could open the prospect of a sound and lasting world-order.

It is not necessary to repeat or review, except in certain directions, the considerations and conclusions set forward in this book with regard to the means and methods or the lines of divergence or successive development which the actual realisation of human unity may take. But still on some sides possibilities have arisen which call for some modification of what has been written or the conclusions arrived at in these chapters. It had been concluded, for instance, that there was no likelihood of the conquest and unification of the world by a single dominant people or empire. This is no longer altogether so certain, for we have just had to admit the possibility of such an attempt under certain circumstances. A dominant Power may be able to group round itself strong allies subordinated to it but still considerable in strength and resources and throw them into a world struggle with other Powers and peoples. This possibility would be increased if the dominating Power managed to procure, even if only for the time being, a monopoly of an overwhelming superiority in the use of some of the tremendous means of aggressive military action which Science has set out to discover and effectively utilise. The terror of destruction and even of large-scale extermination created by these ominous discoveries may bring about a will in the governments and peoples to ban and prevent the military use of these

inventions, but, so long as the nature of mankind has not changed, this prevention must remain uncertain and precarious and an unscrupulous ambition may even get by it a chance of secrecy and surprise and the utilisation of a decisive moment which might conceivably give it victory and it might risk the tremendous chance. It may be argued that the history of the last war runs counter to this possibility, for in conditions not quite realising but approximating to such a combination of circumstances the aggressive Powers failed in their attempt and underwent the disastrous consequences of a terrible defeat. But after all, they came for a time within a hair's breadth of success and there might not be the same good fortune for the world in some later and more sagaciously conducted and organised adventure. At least, the possibility has to be noted and guarded against by those who have the power of prevention and the welfare of the race in their charge.

One of the possibilities suggested at the time was the growth of continental agglomerates, a united Europe, some kind of a combine of the peoples of the American continent under the leadership of the United States, even possibly in the resurgence of Asia and its drive towards independence from the dominance of the European peoples, a drawing together for self-defensive combination of the nations of this continent; such an eventuality of large continental combinations might even be a stage in the final formation of a world-union. This possibility has tended to take shape to a certain extent with a celerity that could not then be anticipated. In the two American continents it has actually assumed a predominating and practical form, though not in its totality. The idea of a United States of Europe has also actually taken shape

and is assuming a formal existence, but is not yet able to develop into a completed and fully realised possibility because of the antagonism based on conflicting ideologies which cuts off from each other Russia and her satellites behind their iron curtain and Western Europe. This separation has gone so far that it is difficult to envisage its cessation at any foreseeable time in a predictable future. Under other circumstances a tendency towards such combinations might have created the apprehension of huge continental clashes such as the collision, at one time imagined as possible, between a resurgent Asia and the Occident. The acceptance by Europe and America of the Asiatic resurgence and the eventual total liberation of the Oriental peoples, as also the downfall of Japan which figured at one time and indeed actually presented itself to the world as the liberator and leader of a free Asia against the domination of the West, have removed this dangerous possibility. Here again, as elsewhere, the actual danger presents itself rather as a clash between two opposing ideologies, one led by Russia and Red China and trying to impose the Communistic extreme partly by military and partly by forceful political means on a reluctant or at least an infected but not altogether willing Asia and Europe, and on the other side a combination of peoples, partly capitalist, partly moderate socialist who still cling with some attachment to the idea of liberty, —to freedom of thought and some remnant of the free life of the individual. In America there seems to be a push, especially in the Latin peoples, towards a rather intolerant completeness of the Americanisation of the whole continent and the adjacent islands, a sort of extended Monroe Doctrine, which might create friction with the European Powers still holding possessions in the northern part of the

continent. But this could only generate minor difficulties and disagreements and not the possibility of any serious collision, a case perhaps for arbitration or arrangement by the U. N. O., not any more serious consequence. In Asia a more perilous situation has arisen, standing sharply across the way to any possibility of a continental unity of the peoples of this part of the world, in the emergence of Communist China. This creates a gigantic bloc which could easily englobe the whole of Northern Asia in a combination between two enormous Communist Powers, Russia and China, and would overshadow with a threat of absorption South-Western Asia and Tibet and might be pushed to overrun all up to the whole frontier of India, menacing her security and that of Western Asia with the possibility of an invasion and an overrunning and subjection by penetration or even by overwhelming military force to an unwanted ideology, political and social institutions and dominance of this militant mass of Communism whose push might easily prove irresistible. In any case, the continent would be divided between two huge blocs which might enter into active mutual opposition and the possibility of a stupendous world-conflict would arise dwarfing anything previously experienced: the possibility of any world-union might, even without any actual outbreak of hostilities, be indefinitely postponed by the incompatibility of interests and ideologies on a scale which would render their inclusion in a single body hardly realisable. The possibility of a coming into being of three or four continental unions, which might subsequently coalesce into a single unity, would then be very remote and, except after a stupendous conflict, hardly feasible.

At one time it was possible to regard as an eventual possibility the extension of Socialism to all the nations;

an international unity could then have been created by its innate tendencies which turned naturally towards an overcoming of the dividing force of the nation-idea with its separatism and its turn towards competitions and rivalries often culminating in open strife; this could have been regarded as the natural road and could have turned in fact into the eventual way towards world-union. But, in the first place, Socialism has under certain stresses proved to be by no means immune against infection by the dividing national spirit and its international tendency might not survive its coming into power in separate national States and a resulting inheritance of competing national interests and necessities: the old spirit might very well survive in the new socialist bodies. But also there might not be or not for a long time to come an inevitable tide of the spread of Socialism to all the peoples of the earth: other forces might arise which would dispute what seemed at one time and perhaps still seems the most likely outcome of existing world tendencies; the conflict between Communism and the less extreme socialistic idea which still respects the principle of liberty, even though a restricted liberty, and the freedom of conscience, of thought, of personality of the individual, if this difference perpetuated itself, might create a serious difficulty in the formation of a World-State. It would not be easy to build a constitution, a harmonised State-law and practice in which any modicum of genuine freedom for the individual or any continued existence of him except as a cell in the working of a rigidly determined automatism of the body of the collectivist State or a part of a machine would be possible or conceivable. It is not that the principle of Communism necessitates any such results or that its system must lead to a termite civilisation

or the suppression of the individual; it could well be, on the contrary, a means at once of the fulfilment of the individual and the perfect harmony of a collective being. The already developed systems which go by the name are not really Communism but constructions of an inordinately rigid State Socialism. But Socialism itself might well develop away from the Marxist groove and evolve less rigid modes; a co-operative Socialism, for instance, without any bureaucratic rigour of a coercive administration, of a Police State, might one day come into existence, but the generalisation of Socialism throughout the world is not under existing circumstances easily foreseeable, hardly even a predominant possibility: in spite of certain possibilities or tendencies created by recent events in the Far East, a division of the earth between the two systems, capitalistic and socialistic, seems for the present a more likely issue. In America the attachment to individualism and the capitalistic system of society and a strong antagonism not only to Communism but to even a moderate Socialism remains complete and one can foresee little possibility of any abatement in its intensity. The extreme success of Communism creeping over the continents of the Old World, which we have had to envisage as a possibility, is yet, if we consider existing circumstances and the balance of opposing Powers, highly improbable and, even if it occurred, some accommodation would still be necessary, unless one of the two forces gained an overwhelming eventual victory over its opponent. A successful accommodation would demand the creation of a body in which all questions of possible dispute could be solved as they arose without any breaking out of open conflict, and this would be a successor of the League of Nations and the U.N.O. and move in the

same direction. As Russia and America, in spite of the constant opposition of policy and ideology, have avoided so far any step that would make the preservation of the U. N. O. too difficult or impossible, this third body would be preserved by the same necessity or imperative utility of its continued existence. The same forces would work in the same direction and a creation of an effective world-union would still be possible; in the end the mass of general needs of the race and its need of self-preservation could well be relied on to make it inevitable.

There is nothing then in the development of events since the establishment of the United Nations Organisation, in the sequel to the great initiation at San Francisco of the decisive step towards the creation of a world-body which might end in the establishment of a true world-unity, that need discourage us in the expectation of an ultimate success of this great enterprise. There are dangers and difficulties, there can be an apprehension of conflicts, even of colossal conflicts that might jeopardise the future, but total failure need not be envisaged unless we are disposed to predict the failure of the race. The thesis we have undertaken to establish of the drive of Nature towards larger agglomerations and the final establishment of the largest of all and the ultimate union of the world's peoples still remains unaltered: this is evidently the line which the future of the human race demands and which conflicts and perturbations, however immense, may delay, even as they may modify greatly the forms it now promises to take, but are not likely to prevent; for a general destruction would be the only alternative destiny of mankind. But such a destruction, whatever the catastrophic possibilities balancing the almost certain beneficial results, hardly limitable in their

extent, of the recent discoveries and inventions of Science, has every chance of being as chimerical as any early expectation of final peace and felicity or a perfected society of the human peoples. We may rely, if on nothing else, on the evolutionary urge and, if on no other greater hidden Power, on the manifest working and drift or intention in the World-Energy we call Nature to carry mankind at least as far as the necessary next step to be taken, a self-preserving next step: for the necessity is there, at least some general recognition of it has been achieved and of the thing to which it must eventually lead the idea has been born and the body of it is already calling for its creation. We have indicated in this book the conditions, possibilities, forms which this new creation may take and those which seem to be most desirable without dogmatising or giving prominence to personal opinion; an impartial consideration of the forces that work and the results that are likely to ensue was the object of this study. The rest will depend on the intellectual and moral capacity of humanity to carry out what is evidently now the one thing needful.

We conclude then that in the conditions of the world at present, even taking into consideration its most disparaging features and dangerous possibilities, there is nothing that need alter the view we have taken of the necessity and inevitability of some kind of world-union; the drive of Nature, the compulsion of circumstances and the present and future need of mankind make it inevitable. The general conclusions we have arrived at will stand and the consideration of the modalities and possible forms or lines of alternative or successive development it may take. The ultimate result must be the formation of a World-State and the most desirable form

THE IDEAL OF HUMAN UNITY

of it would be a federation of free nationalities in which all subjection or forced inequality and subordination of one to another would have disappeared and, though some might preserve a greater natural influence, all would have an equal status. A confederacy would give the greatest freedom to the nations constituting the World-State, but this might give too much room for fissiparous or centrifugal tendencies to operate; a federal order would then be the most desirable. All else would be determined by the course of events and by general agreement or the shape given by the ideas and necessities that may grow up in the future. A world-union of this kind would have the greatest chances of long survival or permanent existence. This is a mutable world and uncertainties and dangers might assail or trouble for a time; the formed structure might be subjected to revolutionary tendencies as new ideas and forces emerged and produced their effect on the general mind of humanity, but the essential step would have been taken and the future of the race assured or at least the present era overpassed in which it is threatened and disturbed by unsolved needs and difficulties, precarious conditions, immense upheavals, huge and sanguinary world-wide conflicts and the threat of others to come. The ideal of human unity would be no longer an unfulfilled ideal but an accomplished fact and its preservation given into the charge of the united human peoples. Its future destiny would lie on the knees of the gods and, if the gods have a use for the continued existence of the race, may be left to lie there safe.

